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THURSDAY, JANUARY 1ST, 2015

WE WISH A VERY HAPPY, HEALTHY, AND SUCCESSFUL NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR READERS AND ADVERTISERS

The Porthcawl swim sets a new record on its 50th anniversary!

GEM readers respond to animal appeal

THE GEM warmly thanks readers for their response to the 'Animal Welfare Donation' campaign this Christmas.

Joanne Eveleigh, who helped to organise the campaign, said: "We have had a great response to our appeal and would like everyone to know that the items collected are being distributed."

(For more on this story, turn to page 21).



These Porthcawl swimmers were raising funds for pancreatic cancer research. (See pages 6, 7, 26 and 32 for more pictures by MALCOLM NUGENT).

THE organisers of the Porthcawl Christmas Morning Swim are reflecting on a stunningly successful 50th anniversary swim, which set a new record! writes PHILIP IRWIN.

All year, they had hoped that the 50th swim might be a special one, and they were rewarded when 1,500 swimmers – a new high – took to the waters.

The event had a charmed life, as heavy rain fell on the preceding days, followed by more rain on Boxing day.

However, Christmas morning was perfect for the swim, with blue skies and a cold, but not freezing, wind.

With the tide halfway down the beach, there was plenty of room for spectators, and an estimated 3,000 were at Sandy Bay to watch.

At 11:45am, Porthcawl Coastguards signalled the start of

the parade and cleared a path

through the spectators down the beach for the swimmers, many in fancy dress.

The procession was led from the Hi-Tide Inn to the beach by Victor Davies and Chris Hughes each now with 50 swims to their name.

Swimmers from all over the UK and overseas took part, and among the regular entrants was veteran swimmer, Susan Powell from Caldicot, who hasn't missed a 'swim' since 1978.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 9)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, OLWEN... FROM HER MAJESTY!



IT was a red letter day in Porthcawl for Mrs Olwen Jones when she received a congratulatory card from the Queen, to mark her 100th birthday.

Mrs Jones, of V2C Lakeview Sheltered Accommodation, celebrated the occasion at the Fairways Hotel, Porthcawl, on December 17.

She was born in Maesteg and moved to Porthcawl to work at the Westward Ho Hotel. She later met Graham, a local artist and gasfitter. They were married in 1938, and lived in Caerphilly, before moving back to Porthcawl.

Olwen has two daughters, six grandchildren and nine great grandchildren.

Several guests in the party sent donations to Prostate Cymru.

www.prostatecymru.com

Olwen is pictured, above, with her birthday card from Her Majesty the Queen.

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Off with the old, on with the new...for a fresh start!

AS we bid farewell to a turbulent 2014 and greet the first day of a new year that could prove even more of a political and social watershed, the revels are tinged with more nervous anticipation than usual.

Many will be glad to see the back of a fractious 12 months that seemed to have more than its share of negative media headlines detailing natural disasters, financial deficits, funding crises, foodbanks, acrimonious disputes at home, and rising global terrorism.

However, The GEM remains ever hopeful that this new year will bring more positive outcomes to remember on all fronts.

We will, as always, continue to do our part by presenting a more balanced picture in our

columns of the true human spirit – reflected in many selfless actions and heartwarming stories of ordinary men and women in our own local community.

This is a world away from the kind of bitter conflicts and controversies that marked so much of last year. It is fervently to be hoped that in this momentous general election year, politicians of all parties will have learnt a lesson from the divisive, highly-personalised attacks engendered by the Scottish referendum that still threaten to disunite the United Kingdom.

To paraphrase a certain great parliamentarian: "jaw-jaw is better than war."

That message was underlined earlier this week

by the director general of the influential British Chambers of Commerce, John Langworth, who called on all our politicians to rise above point-scoring in the forthcoming election campaign.

He warned that – "tawdry political tactics would deflect from the important issues facing the UK economy."

Let us pray that January 1, 2015 heralds a fresh start for frank but civilised, democratic debate, focusing on real grass-roots issues that affect us all on a daily basis, rather than dreary, bipartisan confrontation for party advantage.

It may be forlorn, but that at least is our fervent wish at the dawn of this new year.

After all, the public deserve nothing less.

THE EDITOR

Great War truce is remembered in Porthcawl



HISTORICAL enthusiasts in Porthcawl paid a Boxing Day tribute to all who fought in World War One by re-enacting the famous Christmas truce – when German and British soldiers left their trenches to talk, and even play a game of football.

The commemorative event was organised by Porthcawl Museum and Porthcawl Town AFC in remembrance of the men who had evoked the spirit of Christmas and found the courage to fraternise with the enemy.

Porthcawl Football Club provided both the British and German teams. Following the sound of guns, with the British team in red and the German in white, the teams were led out by two British, and two German, soldiers, in period costume.

Before the kick off, Paul Joseph, the chairman of the museum, addressed the crowd, thanking them and the sponsors for their support and in keeping with the commemorative occasion, Father Masson, the Rector of Porthcawl, conducted a moment of reflection and remembrance.

Undeterred by constant rain, both teams entertained the crowd with some creditable football. In keeping with their forebears, the German team tended to use controlled holding tactics whilst the British were energetic and direct.

The first half was dominated by the British, whose pace up front caused the Germans problems. Before half-time, the German defence relented and referee Trevor Roberts had little option than to give a penalty after Andrew Bowden was brought down in the box by Scott Rundle.

Bowden took advantage of his hard work, and put the British team ahead from the spot.

During the interval, in keeping with the occasion, Mrs Greta Owens, whose father Kannonier Max Wilms was in the German Artillery during the war, led the crowd in the singing of 'Stille Nacht'. The crowd, who had braved horrendous weather, then sang the carol in Welsh and English.

The game resumed with the Germans on the attack. Within a short period, the Germans were level after a break down the right hand side.

A precise cross picked out Greg Tonner who dispatched the ball, clinically, into the

back of the net. Unfortunately, Greg was on the British side!

For the majority of the half, both teams were evenly matched. However, the British team's fitness eventually told, when five minutes from time Joe McCarthy and Paul White executed two opportunist goals. Final score The British 3 Germany 1.

Teams:

Britain: Curtis Ivin, Paul White, Greg Tonner, Will Owen, James Harris, Matt Lav, Karl Cornock, Jonathan Gillett, Tom Marlow, Joe McCarthy, Andrew Bowden.

Germany: Sean Fisher, Mike Booth, Gareth Booth, Scott Rundle, Jon McCarthy, Lee Giles, Damien McCann, Robbie Ivin, Craig Bedford, Matthew Giles, Stefan Cornock, Liam Reddy.

Porthcawl Museum would like to express their great appreciation to:

Porthcawl Town Football Club; Distinctive Antiques; W&B Davies (opticians); The Seagull; John Richardson; Father Phillip Masson and Harris Printers for their support in making the event possible.

*Report by Ceri Joseph, Porthcawl Museum.
Photographs by David Swindenbank.*



The British pressing the German line.



Martin Little, Florien Hollenbach, Ross Walker and Paul Joseph.

WHO WANTS TO BUILD WHAT AND WHERE?

Coity Higher Community Council – Next to phone box at entrance of Pendre off Coity Road, Bridgend – Single bay 4 x A4 size man-made timber lockable noticeboard to display public notices.

Coity Higher Community Council – Six Bells Inn, 120 Heol West Plas, Coity – A3 size man-made timber lockable noticeboard to display public notices (mounted to front wall of pub).

Mr Neil Taylor – 77 Rowans Lane, Bryncethin – Provide dormer extension to front of garage.

Mr Owain Ford – Land off Cwmdu Road, Mynydd Bach, St Johns,

Maesteg – Erection of two agricultural storage buildings and land reggrading works.

Exhaust Tyres & Batteries – 28

Aneurin Bevan Avenue, Brynmeynn Industrial Estate – Additional use to existing exhaust, tyres and batteries fitting (B2 use) to include MoT testing (*sui generis*).

Rev Malcolm Stinton – Land at Derllwyn House, Derllwyn Road,

Tondu – Four bedroom detached house and detached double garage.

Mr David Williams – Land at Glanafon Terrace (adjacent No. 10),

Maesteg – Proposed three-bedroom detached house.

Mr and Mrs Davies – 89 Ewenny Road, Bridgend – Certificate of lawfulness for a proposed single storey rear extension.

Mrs A Rose – 22 Bower Street, Kenfig Hill – Hard standing to front with access ramp.

Mrs C Harris – 12 The Glade, Bryncethin – Two storey extension side of dwelling.

Blackmill Service Station – The Square, Blackmill – Vary condition of P11/13/12/FUL to extend the time granted for operation of hairdressing van.

Ms M Hart – 7 Brynhyfryd, Sarn – Kitchen and shower room extension and detached garage.

Farming Energy Solutions – Ton Phillip Farm, Ffordd y Graifraeth – Screening opinion for a single 100kW wind turbine with a hub height of 29.5m, blade diameter of 22m and tip height of 40.5m.

Scott Waste Ltd – 9-10 Village Farm Road, Village Farm Industrial Estate, Pyle – Change of use to household, commercial and industrial waste transfer station/recycling

facility.

Swiss Vans Ltd – Unit 7, David Street, Bridgend Industrial Estate – New entrance hardstanding for display, first floor office accommodation, new windows/doors.

South Wales Land developments – Land at Brackla Industrial Estate, Brackla – Non material amendment to vary conditions 16, 17, 18 and 19 of /13/246/OUT.

Mrs D Radcliffe – 39 Merthyr Mawr Road, Bridgend – Tir Hir, Rogers Lane, Cefn Cribwr – Barn conversion.

Valleys to Coast Ltd – Land adjacent 15 Heol Persondy, Bettws – Erect eight dwellings with associated hard and soft landscaping (including parking).

Bright Skies Developments Limited – 12 Coyerch Road, Pencoed – Convert existing attic space into single bedsit.

BCBC Communities Directorate – Hut 9, Island Farm, Bridgend – Minor amendment to P1/4/76/BCB, reposition interpretation panels by 3 metres.

Mr S Edwards – Penrhiew, Evanstown, Bridgend – Stable block and agricultural store.

Laleston Community Council – two locations at Rhosla Lane, off High Street, Laleston, Bridgend – two x interpretation panels.

Mr John Sullivan – 1 Deri Avenue, Pencoed – fell silver birch tree.

Mr C Mansell – Branksome, Heol yr Ysgol, Coity – cut tree and hedge to 2012 levels, trim copper beech, reduce width, crop and prune to reduce crown and thin.

Mr C Davies – land at Porthcawl Road (South 18 Curwen Terrace), North Cornelly – outline application for one dwelling with access driveway.

Mr Gerri Norris – former playground Fountain Road, Aberkenfig – erection of two storey dwelling with access driveway and garage.

Manning Construction Ltd – former council office site, Glangwyr Road, Bridgend – demolish existing council offices, divert public footpath and erection of four detached dwellings with integral garages.

Mr Gareth Williams – The white House, Briary Way, Brackla, Bridgend – two storey extension.

HIGH TIDE TIMES

(UNTIL JANUARY 8)

The high tides listed in this week's GEM are those in Porthcawl. It should be remembered that along the coast, high tide times will vary.

For instance, in Barry, the high point will be 20–25 minutes later.

DATE	Time	Ht	Time	Ht
	AM	M	PM	M
01 Thur	02.56	8.4	15.25	8.6
02 Fri	03.57	8.6	16.24	8.8
03 Sat	04.49	8.9	17.13	8.9
04 Sun	05.35	9.1	17.58	9.1
05 Mon	06.19	9.3	18.38	9.2
06 Tues	06.57	9.4	19.17	9.1
07 Wed	07.33	9.1	19.49	8.9
08 Thur	08.07	9.1	20.22	8.8

While The GEM makes every effort to check the accuracy of tide tables, we recommend that anyone putting out to sea, or walking in an area where they could be cut off, should check with a tide table specific to their location.

We abide by the code of practice upheld by the Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO). This contains provisions for issues such as accuracy.

If you have a complaint, write to us at the address below, left, or call editorial manager Don John on 01446 774484. All complaints will be fully investigated. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you may wish to contact IPSO c/o Halton House, 20-23 High Holborn, London EC1N 2JD. Website: www.ipso.co.uk. Tel: 0300 123 2220. E-Mail: complaints@ipso.co.uk. Enquiries: inquiries@ipso.co.uk.



'Buff's' support their local riding for disabled charity

A cheque for £500 was recently presented to the Bridgend County Riding for the Disabled charity by lodges of the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes (RAOB). The presentation was made in Pencoed by Mr David Davies of the RAOB shortly before Christmas – and on hand to receive the cheque were Julie Humphry, the chair of the charity, and trustee Joan Lean (see above).

Photograph by MANDY THOMAS
(www.mandythomasphotography.co.uk)

COMMISSIONER PRAISES SUPPORT FOR ELDERLY PEOPLE IN BOROUGH

THE Older People's Commissioner for Wales has praised work going on across Bridgend to support older people living in the county borough.

Over the past year, the commissioner, Sarah Rochira, and her team have met hundreds of people as part of the 'Commissioner's Engagement Roadshow', a series of visits to learn about inspirational projects and initiatives.

A number of these visits have been to view the work being carried out by Crossroads Care Bridgend around the local authority area.

The organisation runs a weekly community café at Cwrt Gwalia on Aber Road in Ogmore Vale, where residents are able to enjoy lunch together, gain advice on



Organisers of the monthly community soup lunch at St Cynfelyn's Church in Maesteg.



Commissioner's Engagement Coordinator Kate Hughes meeting Mayor of Bridgend, Coun Gary Thomas at a Carers' Rights Day event at Bridgend Carers' Centre.

a wide range of topics and catch up on the local news.

The organisation also runs a community café in Porthcawl, which is providing vital support to people from the area

living with dementia, as well as those who are at risk of becoming lonely and isolated.

The team also joined the monthly community soup lunch at St Cynfelyn's Church in Maesteg, where volunteers cook for 50 people, including residents from a local care home.

Many of these described it as being the only chance they get to socialise outside their home while it provides a setting for many older people from the community to regularly come together.

Sarah Rochira said:

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Tenovus volunteers celebrate milestone dates in Porthcawl



DVLA worker rescues driver from car that flipped over

AN NSL employee working on behalf of DVLA, was praised for his quick thinking following an incident in Bridgend.

He was on duty along Tredegar Road when he noticed an untaxed vehicle.

The motorist realised that this had been noted, and sped off, which led to him losing control of the car, skidding off the road, and flipping over three times.

Shocked, Dale rushed to the motorist's

assistance, opened the car door and managed to pull him out of the vehicle.

He then called the emergency services and waited until they arrived.

Aled Williams, NSL's Pound Manager for Bridgend, said: "Dale's swift actions prevented further injury in what was a serious accident.

"He is a role model within NSL's Pound Team and demonstrates the ethos of the Pound."

SIXTEEN Tenovus Cancer Care volunteers recently celebrated milestone anniversaries as volunteers in the Tenovus Cancer Care Porthcawl shop.

The ladies (pictured) have collectively volunteered for over 185 years for the leading Welsh cancer charity.

Over the last year, the team in Porthcawl helped

Tenovus Cancer Care fund over £1 million of cancer research in Wales and help fund 25 PhD students looking for a cure for cancer.

Tara Nickerson, retail area manager, said: "Volunteers are at the heart of everything we do at Tenovus Cancer Care, we were founded by 10 inspiring volunteers over 70 years ago. Without the

dedication from over 1600 volunteers across Wales, we could not provide the cancer support services we do in communities just like Porthcawl.

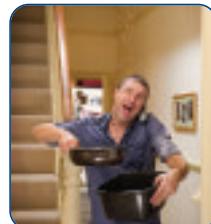
"We rely on volunteers to help us in all sorts of ways, from working in our shops, to helping at events or on our Freephone Cancer support Line. Volunteering is rewarding, fun and you can make a real difference.

"We have a variety of roles that suit a variety of people, young or old, experienced or inexperienced, the most important thing is to enjoy working within a friendly team like the one we have in Porthcawl."

• If you are interested in volunteering, call into the Porthcawl Tenovus Cancer Care shop to find out more.

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Penybont Catenian Circle support the Bridgend Foodbank



PICTURED (left to right): Local PCSO Carl Westgate, Foodbank volunteers June Watson and Margaret Hornsby and Penybont Circle president Martin Rock.

Rest Home grant offer

THE closure of a popular convalescent home in Porthcawl will at least have a happy outcome for the local voluntary sector.

The winding-up of Porthcawl's Rest Bay hotel by its trustees has resulted in an opportunity for charities to access 'unrestricted funding' of up to £100,000 from a grants scheme managed by Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA).

The terms of its constitution require that any funds remaining afterwards – around £500,000 – should be distributed to a registered charity with similar aims and objectives, and WCVA has been asked to help do this through an awards process.

Contact David Cook, policy and engagement officer on 029 2043 1710 or dcok@wcva.org.uk.

A GENEROUS donation of £245 was recently made to the Bridgend Foodbank by the local Circle of the Catenian Association.

Circle president Martin Rock visited the Porthcawl distribution centre to hand over quiz funds raised and food donated.

The Catenian Association is a worldwide group of Catholic men who meet socially every month and support their local churches.

Although not primarily a fundraising organisation, it raises money to support various causes and runs its own charity, the Bursary Fund.

This helps young Catholic volunteers who wish to work overseas in orphanages and schools.

In addition, every local group or circle has its own chosen charity every year. The Brothers of Penybont Circle are raising funds through raffles, quizzes and similar activities.

Membership of the association is open to any practising Catholic man over the age of 18. More details on this and the Bursary fund are available from www.thecatenians.co.uk.

Anyone who wants to know more or wishes to support the fundraising for the Foodbank can contact Bridgend Foodbank, 79a, Nolton Street, Bridgend, CF31 3AA, telephone 01656 858713 or email bridgendfoodbank@aol.com.

Read your GEM online- visit bridgend-today.co.uk



Huw Irranca-Davies MP with Guide Dogs Campaigns Manager James White and six-month-old guide dog puppy James.

Campaign aims to tackle irresponsible car parking

PARKING on pavements is a menace – that was the message delivered to Ogmore MP Huw Irranca-Davies at Christmas.

Representatives from the charity Guide Dogs, including six-month-old puppy James, handed a custom-made cracker to the MP to thank him for his support so far and enlist his help in the fight against irresponsible parking.

Blind and partially sighted pedestrians, as well as wheelchair users and people with pushchairs, say they are often forced into the road when they find the pavement ahead blocked by thoughtless motorists.

Guide dog owner Mansell Griffiths, who lives in Bryncethin, said the problem is particularly bad as he makes his way to work in Barry.

"Sometimes there will be three cars in a row on the pavement," he said. "It's too narrow for me to pass, so I have to weave in and out of them, or I'm forced into

the road. It's terrifying, because I don't know what's hurtling towards me."

Guide Dogs is calling on MPs to back the charity's call for a UK-wide ban on pavement parking by including comments from constituents inside specially-made Christmas crackers.

Mr Irranca-Davies said: "It was a pleasure to meet the guide dog pups in training and receive my cracker from Guide Dogs.

"Pavement parking is a real problem. It is a potentially dangerous obstacle for people with sight loss, wheelchair and mobility scooter users, and people with pushchairs."

Aberkenfig charity shop celebrates its anniversary



Archbishop Barry Morgan, shop manager Karen Homans and Rev Chris Gray.

A CHARITY shop set up by churches to support people in debt has celebrated its first birthday after a successful first year.

The Storehouse Community Shop in Aberkenfig – a joint project by eight churches and chapels in the town – has achieved its aim of raising enough money within its first 12 months to set up a debt centre.

The Rev Stephen Pare, priest-in-charge of Aberkenfig, said they were delighted to have already achieved their aim of raising enough money to set up a debt centre.

"Very quickly upon

opening, a clientele began to arrive who appreciated the very reasonable prices and good quality of the clothes and bric a brac,

and as the year progressed it became apparent that the trading surplus would be sufficient to achieve our aim of setting up a CAP debt centre," said Stephen.

The shop, which sells good quality second-hand clothes, books and CDs, is manned by church volunteers with all the money raised going to local charities,

in addition to the setting up of the Christians Against Poverty debt centre.

"Both schools have always worked very closely and successfully together to ease the transition from infants to juniors, but creating an all-through primary school under the management of one headteacher – albeit on separate sites initially – will bring even greater continuity to the educational experience of the pupils.

"A multi-million pound investment by the council and the Welsh Government's 21st Century Schools Programme will enable us to accommodate the primary provision on one site. This is an excellent opportunity to simplify and rationalise the way we provide education for infants and juniors in Kenfig Hill," he added.

Cabinet consult on new school

PARENTS, teachers, pupils and governors will be asked for their views on plans to create an all-through school in Kenfig Hill for 3-11 year olds, as Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) has launched a consultation into plans to merge Mynydd Cynffig Infants School with Mynydd Cynffig Junior School from September.

Infants school headteacher Amanda Stanford is due to retire in July. If the plans go ahead, Mynydd Cynffig Infants School would continue to operate on its current site until infants and juniors could be accommodated on one site.

There would be one headteacher for the new school – Mr Neil Davies – and one governing body, that of Mynydd Cynffig Primary School and the budget for the new Mynydd Cynffig Primary would also be

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Primary pupils' big band sound!



PICTURED: (back, left to right) Katie Thomas; Elizabeth Pickett; Alisha Coulter; Evie Bennett; front row, Lucy Abbott; Bellway sales advisor Cathy Barry, and Lilly Cuthbertson.

BELLWAY Homes Wales put on a big band celebration with the help of a group of school children, to ring in Christmas.

Guests enjoyed a concert by 10 and 11 year-old pupils from Porthcawl Primary's brass band, after they took over the show home at Bellway's Mallards Reach development.

Carly Maidment, sales manager for Bellway Homes, said: "It was great having the brass band at the development and it was a real treat to meet the pupils and hear them play, as we know they had been rehearsing for their Christmas concert."

Andrew Wood, headteacher at Porthcawl Primary, said: "The pupils were so excited and jumped at the chance to entertain the guests and played all their favourites such as Disney's 'Let It Go' and Jingle Bells."

CARDIFF DEVILS BRING FESTIVE CHEER TO THE CHILDREN'S WARD!



LEFT:
Cardiff Devils ice hockey team delivering gifts to the children's ward at the Princess of Wales Hospital.



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YOUNG patients in the children's wards at the Princess of Wales Hospital were surprised to see Devils handing out festive gifts at Christmastime.

Members of the Cardiff Devils ice hockey team had taken time out from their training schedule to visit the children in Bridgend.

They chatted with the children and had their pictures taken with them. Wendy Brookes, children's play leader at Princess of Wales, said: "This is the third year the team have come to see the children. We can't thank them enough for the generous gifts. The children have loved meeting members of the team."

Staff on the children's ward would like to say a big thank you to all the local companies who have donated gifts this year.

Team Bridgend announced for Miss Wales 2015

TEAM Bridgend has announced the first two members in the Miss Wales 2015 final: students Victoria Dennis (17) from Brackla and Zoe Parris (20) from Porthcawl.

Team Bridgend will be one of 22 teams of young women from each local authority area in Wales in the Miss Wales final in March. Others who would like to represent the region should apply at www.misswales.co.uk.

Members of Team Bridgend are all in with a chance of being crowned Miss Bridgend 2015 and also Miss Wales 2015.

In the run up to the final, they will be tasked with fundraising for the Miss World charity Beauty With A Purpose. The Miss World platform generates millions for good causes every year. All the money raised in Wales will be donated to the Coram – the longest running children's charity currently celebrating its 275th anniversary.

Paula Abbandonato, from Cardiff events and PR company Vibe, is the organiser of Miss Wales. She said: "The Miss



Zoe Parris (left) and Victoria Dennis.

Wales experience is a great way to make Wales 21-year-old friends, glam up, grow in confidence and help studying molecular generate money for good causes at Cardiff University. The reigning more than half a million Miss World is Rolene Strauss, a medical for charity in 10 years and there's still loads student from South Africa.

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HARDY SOULS DESCEND ON PORTHCAWL TO BRAVE THE COLD BRISTOL CHANNEL!

PHOTOGRAPHS by
MALCOLM NUGENT



IT rained in the run-up to Christmas, and it rained on Boxing Day, but Christmas morning was blessed with bright sunshine and a breeze that was cold, but not freezing!

(For more pictures of the swim, see facing page, and pages 26 and 32).

*RIGHT:
Swimmers qualified
for a warming glass
of whisky!*



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Record numbers turn out in the sunshine for the Porthcawl Christmas morning swim

AS we report on page 1 of this issue of The GEM, this year's Porthcawl Christmas Swim exceeded the organisers' expectations, with 1,500 people diving into the cold waters before heading home for their Christmas dinner.

This year, to mark the 50th anniversary, people were invited to pay tribute to two former stalwarts of the swim, Dai 'Viking' Thomas and Arlon Owens – now sadly no longer with us.

The organisers requested that people should dress as clowns or Vikings. Arlon, a founder of the swim, always dressed as a clown, while Dai went by the nickname 'Viking'.

(See more Christmas swim photos on facing page, and on pages 26 and 32).

PHOTOGRAPHS by GLYN EVANS

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PICTURED here with Carwyn Jones AM, are Janice Gregory AM, the Mayor of Bridgend county borough Coun Gary Thomas and his consort Ms Kay Jenkins, BAVO chief executive officer Heidi Bennett, and BAVO Trustees.

BAVO looks back – and forward!

FIRST Minister Carwyn Jones AM recently joined Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations (BAVO), to celebrate their past year's positive achievements at their annual meeting at Bethlehem Church Life Centre in Cefn Cribwr.

The AM for Bridgend said: "It was an honour to be invited to speak at the BAVO AGM this year. I wanted to pay tribute to the great work undertaken by BAVO and the voluntary organisations they support. Their hard work in the community is a credit to all involved."

The umbrella organisation set up to develop and promote voluntary and community action throughout the county borough, BAVO has had another busy and

successful year, but a year that has been heavily characterised by significant funding issues, presenting many challenges for the organisation and the voluntary sector as a whole.

In the presence of Janice Gregory AM, Mayor of Bridgend county borough, Coun Gary Thomas and his consort Ms Kay Jenkins, BAVO members and trustees were given a snapshot of BAVO's work over the last year showing what they had achieved and highlighting the range of support and services that are delivered to communities.

Heidi Bennett, BAVO's chief executive officer said: "We would like to thank our funders who are also facing seriously difficult economic times, but have continued to show commitment to and confidence in the work of BAVO. In the expect more of the same from them next year!"

Red letter day for Yellow Wales



ABOVE: Yellow Wales trustees and sponsors with young winners at the awards ceremony.

YELLOW WALES in Maesteg recently hosted their annual festive lunch and presentation awards that celebrate the achievements of young people it has supported in Bridgend county borough.

Yellow Wales has supported 95 young people over the past year with a total of 66 qualifications being awarded between April and December

2014. Steve Driscoll, manager of Yellow Wales, said: "For many young people, this is the first time that they have gained a nationally-recognised qualification, and it is has been hugely rewarding to see their sense of pride and accomplishment."

For further information about the work of Yellow Wales, call 01656 737494, or visit www.yellowwales.org.uk

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Local opticians staff rally to Operation Christmas Child



ABOVE; Staff at Bridgend Specsavers collect gift boxes for Operation Christmas Child.

A BRIDGEND optician's staff are celebrating after an appeal to collect Christmas gifts for disadvantaged children received an impressive response from the local community.

The staff at Specsavers on Adare Street, collected a total of 165 shoe boxes filled with toys and gifts to donate to this year's Operation Christmas Child appeal.

The charity's annual global appeal provides Christmas gifts for vulnerable children in more than 130 countries across Africa, Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The boxes collected by the Bridgend team were donated to children in Zambia.

The boxes can contain items such as toys, sweets, colouring pencils and notebooks, and simple toiletries like toothbrushes and soap.

They were donated by Specsavers team members, customers and a number of local businesses and

organisations, including Bro Morgannwg podiatry department and Nolton Church, who donated 50 shoe boxes each this year.

Since 1990, the appeal has provided shoe boxes of Christmas gifts to more than 113 million children.

Paul Morris, director of Specsavers in Bridgend, said: "We really enjoyed taking part in the Operation Christmas Child appeal again this year. The response has been fantastic and I would like to thank everyone who donated a box."

"It is easy to forget that not everyone is fortunate enough to receive a bundle of presents at Christmas time, and many children lack even the most basic things we take for granted.

"While these simple items may seem like stocking-filers to many of us, we know that they make a huge difference to a needy child, and made their Christmas a much happier one."

Jon Jam

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Town pays tribute to a local legend

SHORTLY before Christmas, hundreds of people paid their own tribute to Ken Evans, the Porthcawl landlord who became one of the town's best-loved figures.

In the 1970s, Ken and his wife Pat ran the Knights Arms in the Square, and in the 1980s they moved to the Pier Hotel.

Both venues are still fondly remembered by locals who spent their youth with the pubs as their social centre, but it was Ken's time at the Knights Arms that prompted the huge turnout at the funeral.

The Knights was



popular with bikers, and the funeral cortège was led by around 50, all rather older than in their heyday!

The picture (above) shows members of the RNLI and Coastguard paying tribute as the

hearse passed on the seafront.

It was more than appropriate, as Ken was the first paid Porthcawl lifeguard, and a founder member of the RNLI in Porthcawl.

The eldest of four

brothers, and the smallest at six foot four, Ken served in the Welsh Guards and was bought out so that he could play rugby league. When his career was ended by injury, the family settled in Porthcawl.

It was particularly ironic that such a fit, strong man should be struck down by Parkinson's Disease, but Ken bore his condition with great good humour.

On the day of Ken's funeral, the biker-led cortège brought the coffin from The Square to the Porthcawl

Catholic Church, Stella Maris Our Lady of the Sea, and the bikers then laid the mourners to Croychurch

Crematorium, where Ken's son Christian,

spoke eloquently about his father's life.

It was a fitting send-off for one of Porthcawl's best-loved figures.

Philip Irwin

Swim's new record

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

There were also visitors from New Zealand, Australia and South Africa who joined in the festive swim.

Spokesperson for the Swim committee, Ian Stroud, said: "The swim is truly a family event, with many different generations of the same family taking part."

"Many followed the organisers' request to dress as Vikings or clowns, in memory of two of our past chairmen. The atmosphere around the swimmers is very special and hard to explain."

"I look forward each year to meeting old friends, many who I only see at the swim, and we exchange Christmas greetings, sometimes up to our waist in the sea!"

The swim chairman, Nicola Willis commented: "Once again, we have been grateful to all who supported our

swim and the number of people who turned up was fantastic."

"Collections are made during the swim and we hope the bucket collections and swimmers sponsorship will help us to make some generous donations in the New Year."

"Our main beneficiaries this year are Ty Hafan hospice and Sandville Self Help Centre, we will also help local charities and organisations."

"As a small committee, we are delighted the way we have been supported once again this year. I would like to thank all swimmers, spectators, individuals, businesses, fellow 'Buckaneers' and organisations, who help in so many ways to make the swim such a successful event in the towns calendar."

"We are delighted that this special anniversary has been such a fantastic success".

Philip Irwin

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'ELFSTEDDFOD' MISSES OUT ON WORLD RECORD



B R I D G E N D
County Borough Council has thanked all of the 'Elves' who crammed into Bridgend town centre recently to take part in the 'Elfsteddfod'.

Santa gave 1,550 little helpers some time off from their Christmas preparations, and they were joined on Adare Street by acrobat elves,



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It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services.

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Cloudy2Clear service the Vale, Bridgend, RCT and Porthcawl areas and Phil is finding that his

approach is a major factor in its success. "The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people I've

done work for, which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated."

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Pub quiz raises £1,000 for appeal... But Jade (17) needs more funds so she can learn to walk

Jade is presented with a cheque for £1,000 from (left to right) Gareth Luff, John Dickinson, Sam Radovic (landlord) and Helen Embling.

THE Prince of Wales public house in Coychurch held its Christmas charity quiz and raffle, when a special guest was Jade Owen, who lives in Bridgend with her mum, dad and two younger siblings. Jade was born with Diplegic Cerebral Palsy, and is unable to walk.

After taking an active part in the quiz, the 17-year-old was presented with a cheque for £1,000 towards her fundraising for a life-changing operation she hopes to have next summer.

There is some hope from the centre of world excellence for this condition in St Louis, Missouri, USA. Dr Park performs an operation called Selective Dorsal Rhizotomy (SDR), in which dead nerve endings are cut away from the spine to permit the 'good' nerves to perform more effectively. This improves posture and allows the patients to get their feet flat on the

ground which in turn allows them to walk unaided. Jade draws confidence from a young lad in Bridgend who has already had the operation and is now playing football with his friends. It is not possible to describe the support given to Jade by all her family who are totally dedicated to Jade's dream of being able to walk. The closeness of the family members and their devotion to the cause is unsurpassed.

They all need help in achieving a dream which on the face of it seems impossible, but in reality

is attainable. The list of things to pay for is very long, but includes two operations, airfares for Jade and her parents, a month's stay in the USA, post-care and physiotherapy in the UK, and a post-operation follow-up trip to the USA after about six months.

As you can guess this does not come cheap. Jade, and the unending effort of her family, have so far raised about £30,000. At least another £15,000 to £20,000 is required.

Dr Park will see Jade in the UK in about April;

Alison Dickinson

the plan is that her operation will be scheduled for June – but this needs the money to be in place.

Anything that anyone can do will be appreciated. If you wish and go to the Tree of Hope website to make a donation.

The Tree of Hope is the registered charity which is looking after the funding for Jade. Your donation will help Jade with her dream and will make you one of her angels.

Dr Park will see Jade in the UK in about April;

Alison Dickinson

Vale Photographic Club news

WELCOME to the first of a regular column highlighting the activities of the Vale Photographic Club.

We are a small friendly group who meet every Friday from September to July at 7.15pm in the Ystradwen village hall (starting back January 16).

We aim to arrange a varied and interesting programme to suit all tastes and levels of ability. Events include presentations from guest speakers and our own members, practical sessions,

demonstrations, social outings, photographic trips and a number of competitions.

If you were lucky enough to receive a new camera from Santa this year, regardless of ability or type of camera, why not consider joining? Attendance is £2 on the night, with membership open to anyone aged 16 and above. Please note, potential members aged 16-18 will need to be accompanied by a suitable adult.

For those who wish to enter, we hold a number of internal competitions, judged by a guest speaker, with winning entries going on to represent the Vale at national level (don't be put off, this is purely optional!).

A selection of winning entries from our last competition are shown – 'Reflective Moments' by Mike Davies, 'Tears of a Clown' by Bridget Craddock and Amber Nectar' by Gareth Williams.

For further information on the club, visit our website at <http://www.vale-photographic-club.co.uk>, join our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ValePhotographicClub/>, or simply turn up to a club evening. Whether you're looking to develop your skills as a serious photographer, just starting out with a new camera, or simply looking to take better photographs of the kids, you'll be most welcome.

ANDREW COLEMAN

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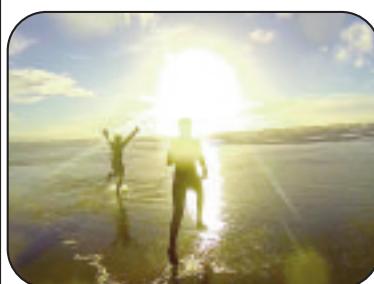


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Photographers' nature snaps win awards



Sheryl Ewe from the Vale of Glamorgan, winner of the 12-18 category.



Jacob Pearce from Maesteg, winner of the under-11 category.

WITH £450 of high street vouchers up for grabs, young people aged 18 or under were asked to send in their snaps showing their friends enjoying the natural environment for a Natural Resources Wales (NRW) photo competition.

by how the photo captured all the natural elements – water, land and air – to create a dramatic image.

In the 12 to 18-years-olds category Sheryl Ewe (17) from Atlantic College in the Vale, snapped up first prize for her striking photo of friends running into the sea at sundown.

The judges were impressed with Sheryl's use of natural light to create a powerful image.

Second place went to Nathan Pycroft (15) from St Mary's and St Patrick's Primary in Maesteg, Bridgend took first place for his moody photo of a kite being flown on a beach against a cloudy backdrop. The judges were impressed into the air on a beach.

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Pupils help the Big Wrap



Jane Hutt with Big Wrap volunteers and pupils from Ysgol Bro Morgannwg.

THE Vale Foodbank again organised The Big Wrap this year, providing Christmas gifts and food hampers for hundreds of children and their families across the area.

All those who receive gifts donated by the community are referred from agencies in the statutory and voluntary sector.

Vale AM Jane Hutt visited the volunteers, including pupils from Ysgol Bro Morgannwg, to thank them for their hard work and commitment.

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New Year's Honours awards for local people

LOCAL people honoured in the New Year's Honours List include the following:

Melville Stanley Evans of Pontyclun received an OBE for services to the NHS in Wales.

Mrs Shirley Rose Davis-Fox of ISA Training, Bridgend, received an MBE for services to the hairdressing industry.

Mrs Judith Hilary Jenkins, head of nutrition

and dietary services in Cardiff and Vale NHS Trust, received an MBE for services to people's health and wellbeing in Wales.

Mrs Jennifer Ann Morgan of Penyfai, senior manager at Woodlands High School, received an MBE for services to special education and the community in Cardiff. Mrs Karyl Carter of Heol y Cyw, Stroke Association co-ordinator for Bridgend, received a BEM for services to stroke survivors.

Volunteers provide an invaluable service in hospitals and other centres in Bridgend, Swansea and Neath Port Talbot.

Around 140 of them, representing the almost 500 people now volunteering with the health board, attended the inaugural thank-you event at the Aberavon Beach Hotel in Port Talbot.

ABMU chairman Andrew Davies, who joined the guests on the day, said: "This is our very first thank-you event for the hundreds of volunteers that help us, day in, day out, particularly in our four acute hospitals.

"Our volunteers help patients, their families and their friends through often very difficult times. We hope this is going to be an annual event by which we, as a health board, can say a very big thank you to all our volunteers."

The guests represented volunteering at Morriston, Singleton, Princess of Wales, Neath Port Talbot and Maesteg

Hospitals, along with Port Talbot Resource Centre, chaplaincy and ABMU's three palliative care units.

Entertainment included singing performances by Nicky Taliessin and Hannah Rix, fresh from their appearance in *White Christmas* at Cardiff's New Theatre, and a quiz.

ABMU interim volunteer manager Paul Jones said:

"Volunteering is vital to the organisation. We have approaching 500 volunteers at present and those numbers will be increasing as we continue to develop.

"We provide an invaluable service that really does those little extra things that perhaps staff haven't always got the time to do, that volunteers take pride in doing."

"It could be befriending, running errands for patients or just providing a friendly face to sit and chat to. That's the sort of value they bring to the organisation."

Among the guests was Anne-Marie Winslade, who lives in Llanwit Major and started volunteering at Princess of Wales Hospital, where she helps run the information desk, 15 years ago. She said: "The hospital has served

HOSPITALS' DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS HONOURED AT FESTIVE CELEBRATION



Annette Francis from Swansea, a maternity volunteer in Singleton Hospital.



Anne-Marie Winslade, who has volunteered at Princess of Wales Hospital for 15 years.

my family for quite some years and so it's a way of giving back. I enjoy meeting the public and hopefully make somebody's experience in the hospital a little less stressful.

"It does wonders for your self-esteem when somebody thanks you – and they do that most often."

For Annette Francis,

being a maternity ward volunteer in Singleton Hospital is a dream come true.

Annette of Llansamlet started three months ago but enjoys it so much she is now planning to train for a career there.

"It has given me a big chance and I'm very proud and privileged to be given this position," she said.

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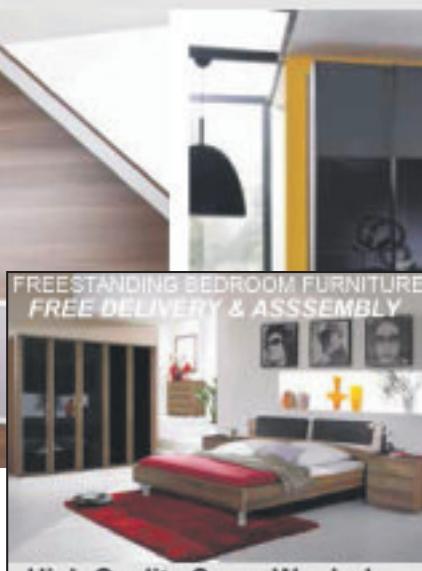


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THE TREE FESTIVALS LIGHT UP CHURCHES



CHURCHES throughout south Wales brightened the run-up to Christmas with hundreds of festive trees.

The eighth year for our popular five-day Christmas Tree festival and this year we had 52 trees on show. "Various groups ranging from schools to charities come in and decorate a tree along a particular theme and then each year we choose a different charity to support from the proceeds. This year we supported Bro Morgannwg Baby Loss Group and raised £1,400."

Other events included the Christmas Tree Festival at All Saint's Church, Porthcawl, which had 73 trees on display.

Priest Father Craig Vaughan said:

"The festival was run in conjunction with Rotary Porthcawl and raised around £1,250 – with the money split between the parish and the Rotary's charities.

"As the amount of money raised shows, it was very successful and deepened the links we have in this parish with local community organisations and the schools."

Canon Mike Komor, Rector of Coity, Nolton and Brackla with Coychurch, said: "It's

Out and About with The GEM

Jolie's Unbroken is an incredible story, but is predictably played out...

ACTORS who turn to the director's chair generally manage to be reasonably successful; running across the ages, the likes of Clint Eastwood, Ben Affleck and Jon Favreau have all achieved acclaim behind the camera.

However, few actresses make the jump, with Angelina Jolie putting her director's hat on with *Unbroken*.

This true-life World War Two-set story tells of Louis Zamperini (Jack O'Connell), an Olympian who finds himself downed in the ocean when a flight goes wrong, leaving him to survive with his crew in the water for 47 days.

However, when Zamperini is rescued, it's by the Japanese navy and he is taken to a prisoner of war camp

where his life is made a living hell, particularly by a sadistic sergeant known as 'the Bird' (Takamasa Ishihara)...

At this time of year, true-life stories are ten-a-penny in cinemas, no doubt in part due to the appealing nature of them in relation to the awards season (having accounted for three of the past four best picture winners at the Academy Awards).

What sets *Unbroken* apart is the sheer incredible nature of the story, how a man went from being an Olympian to being pushed to the very end of his tether – you can be pretty sure that Zamperini's nickname wasn't 'Lucky Louis'!

Considering this is Angelina Jolie's second effort behind the camera (her first, *In the Land of Blood and Honey*, didn't find a home on these shores) it's a story crafted with an incredible eye for the visual, and also sees



by
GARETH JAMIESON
Follow Screen Talk on Twitter – @GEMScreenTalk

Jolie marshall excellent performances from the cast. However, despite the nature of the story, it all feels a little too predictable and very rarely does it take you by surprise.

What does surprise is just how composed and well versed Jolie is considering this is her sophomore effort. Opening with a gorgeous sunrise peppered with bombers heading out on a mission, the film never fails to look wonderful, whether it's the open stretch of sea Zamperini and company find themselves stranded in, or the cruel, austere brutality of the prisoner of war camp.

Jolie manages to couple this with a script (that involves, oddly

enough, the Coen brothers) that burns slowly and captures the key points of Zamperini's life – his Olympic running, the time he spent at sea and the time in the POW camp – but doesn't really shade in the spaces around him.

One development, which receives its payoff in the closing crawl that these films are seemingly contractually obliged to provide, would have made for an intriguing postscript to the story on screen rather than simply explained away in text.

As such, while the tale is one that you would be hard-pressed to create as work of fiction, it ultimately comes off feeling as though it's been filtered through a checklist for these grandstanding biopics, the faint aroma of those that have gone before (the likes of *Mandela* are evoked by the prison scenes, for example) lingering long after the credits have rolled.

If 2014 was a breakout year for Jack O'Connell, then the actor hasn't started the new one off sluggishly at all on the basis of this turn. If *Starred Up* and *'71* showed an actor with an incredible slow-burning intensity (and a predilection towards masochism), given how roughed-up he is in those two films), then

Unbroken continues that trend; he holds the film well, and the only drawback is the lack of depth the script gives him.

The rest of the cast isn't short on quality but don't get much in terms of screen time, with Takamasa Ishihara's cold-blooded sergeant grabbing the majority of it with a performance that is chilling in its execution but again struggles to break free from the lack of dimension afforded by the screenplay.

It's the script's lack of depth and inability to wholly shake off the shackles of cliché that affect *Unbroken*, because outside that it is a very impressive film indeed; but with a screenplay weighed down by these faults it becomes purely a very good one.

VERDICT – As impressive as Angelina Jolie's second directorial effort is, and coupled with a superb lead performance from ever-developing Jack O'Connell, ultimately *Unbroken* is broken by a feeling of the all-too-familiar. However the incredible nature of such an amazing story will keep you captivated. Enjoyable.

SEE THIS IF YOU LIKED: *Rescue Day* (2006), *Castaway* (2000).

Ty Hafan lottery draw winners

THE following are winning numbers in the Ty Hafan Crackerjackpot lottery draw number D858: The rollover of £500 was not won this week.

● £2,000: 753075.
● £10: 973377, 115726, 845595, 381378, 538786, 557457, 373530, 262615, 704321, 781410, 659550, 554961, 821984, 749649, 365696, 210523, 856204, 618751, 327907, 310794.

● £5: 550734, 702085, 169906, 991843, 786092, 163922, 107340, 741680, 889441, 188698, 985335, 595978, 619901, 467466, 180101, 105275, 703319, 742810, 773342, 334565, 554070, 106577, 673084, 567252, 984171, 541553, 333743, 371611, 125723, 884550, 360693, 964121, 200550, 625856, 393564, 960713, 815642, 301399, 250955, 257259, 811521, 254410, 651496, 838148, 322281, 529482, 893910, 745635, 423035, 523015, 247408, 153762, 819599, 438395, 552857, 842762, 278780, 310392, 485143, 1623.

THE following are winning numbers in the Ty Hafan Crackerjackpot lottery draw number D859:

● £1,000 rollover:

● £2,000: 753075.
● £10: 481347; 394071; 223595; 216004; 144895; 865053; 529443; 375055; 468587; 468357; 251593; 763336; 853058; 566065; 718125; 787672; 242446; 675762; 545089; 1353, 628790.

● £5: 628790; 658761; 747601; 408866; 115026; 707564; 479690; 411475; 363953; 484234; 780615; 232950; 630142; 209343; 858617; 118100; 632017; 377706; 520518; 686317; 278608; 155891; 369086; 936230; 742806; 791726; 348016; 250126; 425105; 878710; 259515; 506045; 819259; 117137; 422786; 801651; 435857; 435939; 325581; 634044; 639760; 461784; 102811; 173993; 377460; 935454; 293029; 709875; 274079; 682312; 159990; 346405; 816448; 356437; 2075.

The GEM cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions contained in the above.

For lottery information please telephone 029 2053 2300.

● £1,000 rollover:

Film will relate the Welsh Guards' story

A NEW Ogmore-based company, Centennial Film has marked the centenary of the Welsh Guards with an imaginative project.

The Heart of the Dragon – the Welsh Guards Story is a cinema documentary that tells the story of this world-famous regiment, whose Colonel is Prince Charles.

It is privately financed by investors from Xénos, the Wales Business Angels Network – and by former members of the Welsh Guards.

The 90-minute film will relate the story of the regiment from its birth in the Great War – while still catching its centenary events on St

David's Day 2015.

Viewers will learn of the Welsh Guards' heroic actions in two world wars and in Aden, Northern Ireland, the Falklands and, more recently, Afghanistan. Set against a Welsh backdrop, the film will have a haunting soundtrack that reveals how successions of Welsh Guardsmen made their native music integral to life in the



The Welsh Guards at 'Trooping of the Colour'.

YOUR CHANCE TO JOIN NEW DANCE COMPANY

THE Vale Council's arts development department has created 'aDvance Dance', a contemporary dance company for young people aged 14-18, by working together with arts teams in other local authority areas and National Youth Dance Wales.

way for young people to get fit and healthy while enjoying classes taught by professional dancers. It's also an opportunity to learn new dance moves and enhance your skills to further forward your education and career."

If you are aged between 14-18, are already dancing on a regular basis, live

in the Vale, Bridgend, Merthyr,

Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Caerphilly or Rhondda Cynon Taf, and you are able

to give one Saturday a month to

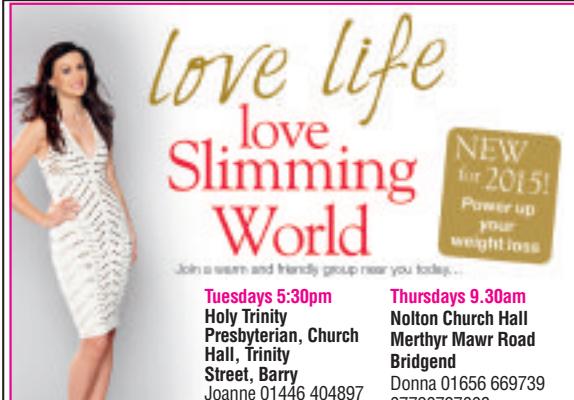
aDvance your dance skills, then get in touch and register your interest by telephoning NYAW on 029 2026 5060

or emailing nyaw@nyaw.co.uk with 'aDvance' in the subject line.

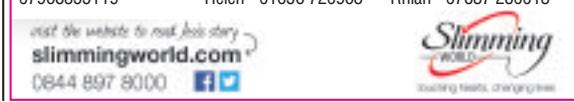
You need to provide your name, age, date of birth, telephone number and your dance school, organisation or group.

Confirmation about your audition place and further details will be sent once you have registered.

If you want further information about the dance training course please contact the Arts Development team on 01446 709805 or any of the other arts development services in the local authority areas listed.



Tuesdays 5:30pm	Thursdays 9.30am
Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church Hall, Trinity Street, Barry Joanne 01446 404897	Nolton Church Hall Merthyr Mawr Road Bridgend Donna 01656 669739 07790797008
Tuesdays 5:30pm and 7:30pm	Thursdays 9:30am
The Welfare Hall, Hope Avenue, Next To The Old Cinema, Aberkenfig, CF32 9PR Lorraine 01656 734710	Cowbridge Rugby Club The Broad Shoard Rob - 07708 941279
Mondays 5:30pm and 7:30pm	Thursday at 5.30pm
Tabernacle Church Kings Square, Barry Lorraine 01446 407002	Pencoed RFC Felindre Road, Pencoed Donna 01656 669739 07790797008
Monday 5.30 & 7.30pm	Scout Hall, Minerva Street Bridgend
Christchurch Methodist Church, Ogmore Vale Steph 07584 563896	Rhian - 07837 280013
Wednesday 5:30pm and 7:30pm	Thursdays 5:30pm
Elfed Avenue United Church, Elfed Avenue, Penarth Nia 07793 885581	Highlight Park Community Centre, Barry Annamarie 01446 736534
Tuesdays 9:30am	Saturdays 9:30am
Parish of Our Lady & St Illtyd, (Catholic Church), Ham Lane East, Llanwit Major Helen 01446 750738/ 07968355119	Westward Community Centre, Llangewydd Road, Cefn Glas Gail 07551 576592
Tuesdays 5:30pm and 7:30pm	Saturday 9:30am and 11:30am
Parish of Our Lady & St Illtyd, (Catholic Church), Ham Lane East, Llanwit Major Helen 01446 750738/ 07968355119	Brackla Community Centre, Brackla Rhian - 07837 280013



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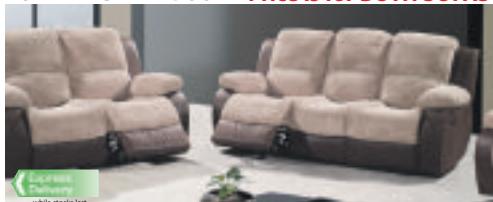
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Kenfig Hill Church hosts annual carol service starring local primary pupils

Report and photographs by
Keith E Morgan

IN the run-up to Christmas, the congregation of St Theodore's Church, Kenfig Hill, was treated to a carol concert, featuring the infant and junior choirs from Mynydd Cynffig Primary School.

The service was conducted by the Rev Jonathan Durley, Priest-in-Charge at St Theodore's.

The 'grown-ups' in St Theodore's Church choir also sang for a packed congregation that included Bridgend MP Madeleine Moon.

RIGHT: The choir enters the church from the vestry.

BELOW:

Mrs Greta Rogers and Madeleine Moon.



ABOVE: The infant choir from Mynydd Cynffig.



ABOVE: The junior school choir from Mynydd Cynffig Primary School.



FESTIVE NEWS FROM PORTCAWL STROKE CLUB

A time to thank these special people for all their support

THERE are so many people to thank at this special time of the year – where do we start?

We would like to say a big thank you to the Portcawl Male Voice Choir, who give a tremendous carol service performance at the Grove Golf Club on Friday, December 12, and Mair Davies, the musical director. Everyone enjoyed the festive musical night.

Thanks also go to the Grove Golf Club and staff members: mulled wine and mince pies were served throughout the night.

Their generous donation will help to brighten up the lives of those disadvantaged by a stroke.

It will support those who are recently out of hospital, whose self esteem and confidence may have been shattered.

A huge, huge, thank you to Lyn and Yvonne Guttridge, who visit the Portcawl Stroke Club yearly and actively involve all members to make a Christmas table centre piece.

They are truly a wonderful couple, who give up their precious time for others less fortunate than themselves. We would also like to thank their helpers.

There have been many talented people who visited Portcawl Stroke Club over the years, so we would like to thank them all for giving us so much pleasure.



One of the Christmas centre pieces.

The Portcawl allotment has been a great success this year, this is thanks to Rob Saunders, Don Jones and Salet, plus other allotment holders,

sharing a community spirit. One of the members, Mrs Esther Beresford, would like to thank the Princess of Wales Hospital, for the

tremendous care she received by all the medical staff, after an accident occurred at her home.

An ambulance arrived within 10 minutes, took her to casualty and a bed was found in the heart unit. Esther said: "I was cared for so well."

Thinking of all our Stroke Club friends, who are ill at the moment, wishing you all a speedy recovery and may 2015 be a brighter year for you all.

We would also like to thank all the editors, community supporters and organisers.

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

*Barbara Matthews
(Portcawl Stroke Club)*

ABOVE: The infant and junior choirs of Mynydd Cynffig Primary School were in fine voice for the congregation of St Theodore's Church as they performed a selection of carols to entertain their audience.



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Super mum Donatella gives birth to 11 kittens!

A RESCUED cat had her paws full this Christmas after giving birth to a staggering 11 kittens – one of the largest litters on record.

Tabby Donatella astounded staff at Cats Protection's Bridgend Adoption Centre after she went into labour in December and produced her bumper brood.

Although one was sadly stillborn, the 10 remaining kittens and their mother all appeared in good health after a five-hour labour.

Donatella, thought to be aged around one-year-old, was handed into the charity just a week earlier after a householder who had been feeding her noticed she was heavily pregnant. Cats usually give birth to an average of three to six kittens, with larger litters normally resulting in a higher mortality rate.

The world's largest litter was born in 1970 when a Burmese/Siamese cat gave birth to 19 kittens, four of which were stillborn.

Cats Protection's Bridgend Adoption Centre Manager Sue Dobbs said: "I've never seen this many kittens in one litter my 16 years at the centre. We just couldn't believe our eyes as they kept coming."

"Donatella is a tiny cat, and having been a stray she is also very underweight. I thought she may have five or six, but I wouldn't have been surprised if she had lost some of them considering her poor condition. So to have this many surviving



kittens is incredible.

This time of year. But it's important to remember that this is not a fairytale – Donatella was a stray who has been through quite an ordeal to carry and give birth to so many kittens.

"She is lucky that someone noticed her and handed her into us as it is likely that many more of her kittens would have perished otherwise.

"Of course the kittens are adorable, but Donatella's story does show why it is so important that cats are neutered. She would have had a tough life as an un-neutered stray, and if they had survived being born on the streets, her kittens would have faced a similar plight."

Cats Protection's Clinical Veterinary Officer Beth Skillings said it was rare for such a large number to be born alive.

"It's hard not to find Donatella's story heart-warming, especially at

'Law now on side of guide dogs' says the Ogmore MP

O G M O R E M P Huw Irranca-Davies was thanked by national charity, Guide Dogs, for his work in helping change the law to protect guide dogs from attacks by other dogs.

After a long campaign, thanks to the strong personal support of shadow Defra Minister Huw Irranca-Davies and other Members of Parliament, Guide Dogs succeeded in convincing the UK Government to amend the Dangerous Dogs Act.

The changes create sentences for irresponsible owners who allow their dogs to

attack a guide dog. The law now considers an attack on an assistance dog to be aggravated assault. This will help protect assistant dogs and their owners.

In Wales there are 252 guide dog owners. The new law will allow them to keep the dogs they rely on for an independent life safe from attack.

From this year, any attack on an assistant dog by another dog carries a maximum sentence of three years in prison for the owner.

Guide Dogs Wales, the law is now on

OLDCASTLE PACT MEETING
THE Oldcastle PACT meeting will take place on January 28 at 6.30pm in Brynteg Lower School library, Bridgend.

YOUR CHANCE TO SHARE THE COMMUNITY NEWS...

Aberkenfig and District Women's Institute

President Eunice Williams welcomed members to the last meeting of 2014 when 'Happy Birthday' was sung to Ethel Rudge, Paddy Bailey and Gillian Williams.

It was agreed that Tondu Primary School Choir were excellent when they sang at the November meeting.

Congratulations to Pat Phillips from Pencoed WI who won the Scrabble competition and to Aberkenfig member Sheila Gunston who came second.

There are special events taking place each month as the Women's Institute is celebrating its 100th birthday. Twelve members from Aberkenfig WI will be travelling to the Aberavon Beach Hotel on January 19 for lunch, followed by a floral demonstration. There is a 'Taste of Wales' in Llanharry Workingmen's Club in February and a four-night spring holiday in Carnarfon in May, as well as other activities for members.

After the business, the meeting became a party! Crackers were pulled and hats donned and it was time to attack the tea laid out invitingly.

The raffle was drawn and the winners were Joanne Davies, Paddy Crocombe. The competition for the nicest Christmas ornament was won by Irene Burgess.

To round off the afternoon, Joanne, the daughter of member Pat Lewis, played popular carols on her accordion and everyone joined in the singing.

The next meeting is on January 14 in the Len Evans Centre in Heol Personly, Aberkenfig at 2pm. The speaker will be Felicity Watkins, whose subject is 'This and That' and the competition is for an embroidered item.

Visitors and new members are welcome at the WI meetings which take place on the second Wednesday of each month.

For further information, ring Dilys on 01656 725399, or go to www.cobwebs.com

Tondu Primary School

MRS Susan Pilcher congratulates the children who won a prize in the Newcastle Higher Community Council design of Christmas cards competition, which was open to all schools in its area.

The following children won a prize: Infants – 1st prize, George Jarman-Davies; 2nd, Corey Thomas; 3rd, Jack Eastwood. Juniors – 1st prize, Jessica Evans; 2nd, Kelsie Mably; 3rd,

NORTH BRIDGEND NEWS

A message for all readers in the north of Bridgend who would like to have items included in the community news columns of THE GEM: If you wish to submit reports on any social activity in this region, please contact me. I am very approachable and will endeavour to include every newsworthy subject.

CLIVE MITCHELL

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Libby Barrett.

Children are to have daily swimming lessons in the following classes: Year-4 and children in class Taf (Miss Jones and Miss Mahoney) from January 12 until January 23 and class USK (Mr Lewis) will be from Monday, January 26 until January 30.

The PTA would like to thank everyone for their donations for the Christmas fair and parents who helped. The money raised from this event (nearly £500) will be given to the school to continue to develop IT resources.

Best wishes!

THE following pupils will be taking part in the preliminary heats of the Dunraven Windows' Bridgend County Young Singer of the Year competition, organised by The Maesteg Gleemen Male Voice Choir in conjunction with Bridgend County Borough Council.

The competition fosters young talent and encourages the performance of classical music by young vocalists.

The heats are being held at Maesteg Town Hall on January 17. In the group ages 11 to 14, the singers are: Millie Stables (Porthcawl Comprehensive); Abi Audsley (Porthcawl Comprehensive); Matthew Daly (Bryntirion Comprehensive); Tessa Castanera-Webber (St Clares); Layla Millar (Porthcawl Comprehensive).

For ages 15-18: Lucy Vinen (Porthcawl Comprehensive); Lauren Coates (Bryntirion Comprehensive); Anwen Angharad Dixon (Ysgol Llangynwyd).

The winner of each category will receive 'The Bryan Davies Trophy' and a prize of £500, made up as follows: £100 personal cheque and a voucher for £400 to further music education within his/her school along with a personal trophy.

The runners-up in each category will receive £50 and a voucher for £50 to further music education within his/her school along with a personal trophy.

Good deed
THREE pupils from Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen (Ynysawdre Comprehensive School) had seen a notice in the local Lidl store regarding an

Ysgol Cynwyd Sant Maesteg are celebrating after being crowned winners of S4C's *Carol yr Wyl* competition. The triumphant choir fought off stiff competition from nine other schools competing for this year's title on S4C's afternoon magazine show, *Prynhawn Da*.

Judges Alun Guy and Elin Llywelyn-Williams were looking for the best original carol, with the schools' music teachers responsible for composing the carol.

The winning carol – 'Nadolig 1914' – marked a century since the football game between German and British soldiers in the trenches of the First World War.

Judge and Côr y Cwm conductor Elin Llywelyn-Williams stated: "We were looking for a blend of words and music where the message of Christmas was clear. "The carol had a wonderful feel and mood to it and mixed perfectly with the traditional carol, 'Silent Night'.

"It was beautifully accompanied by the violin and harp."

Alun Guy added: "We have a never-ending supply of composing talent in Wales. The teachers have done such a good job and this carol had a great deal of depth."

Welsh Wildlife Trust

THE Bridgend Group members meet at the visitor centre in the Parc Slip nature reserve, Fountain Road, Tondu on the first Monday of the month.

Tickets can be obtained from Rob on 07969 203251, John on 07429 637068, any chorister or Maesteg town hall box office.

On Monday, January 5 there will be a talk on amphibians and reptiles around the world by Hugh Langsdown at 7.30pm.

The visitor centre is open from 6.30pm so that refreshments can be obtained.

Three Canons link with Llandaff Cathedral

WHEN Canon Mike Komor was installed as a Canon of Llandaff Cathedral, history was made as he became the third of three incumbents of one small parish to join the prestigious Llandaff Cathedral Chapter.

Canon Komor, a former incumbent of the parish of Ewenny and St Brides Major joins another former incumbent Canon Mark Preece and the present incumbent, the Venerable Philip Morris, Archdeacon of Margam on the Chapter.

"We think this must be unique in the whole Anglican Communion for two former and the present incumbent of a parish to serve together on a Cathedral

Chapter," said Archdeacon Morris. "Ewenny and St Brides Major is only a small rural parish, so it feels very proud to have its clergy honoured in this way."

Canon Komor was Vicar of Ewenny and St Brides Major from 2000 to 2005 before moving to his current post of Rector of Coity, Nolton and Brackla.

Canon Preece was Vicar of Ewenny and St Brides Major from 1992 to 1999. He is currently Rector of Canton and was installed as a Canon of the Cathedral in April of this year.

Archdeacon Morris who was installed as a Canon in 2000, took over as Vicar of Ewenny and St Brides Major from Canon Komor in 2005. As members of the Cathedral Chapter, they oversee the running of the Cathedral.

In Business Update

New Pilates classes in Barry and Cowbridge

PILATES classes return with a busy schedule in the New Year: in Barry, there are two new courses for beginners – and classes are starting in Cowbridge at a new venue for Pilates at Curves Gym.

The new classes are six-week introductory courses ideal for those with little or no experience of Pilates. The course begins on January 8, at 9am, and on January 19, at 11.30am in Barry.

In Cowbridge, the courses starts on Tuesday, January 20 at 10am.

With another six classes to choose from for beginners, improvers and intermediates, there is plenty of choice. There are a few beginners' places available in the evening classes for new starters at 5.30pm on Monday and 7.15pm on Friday in Barry.

Classes are run by qualified Pilates teacher Sharon Sylvester. For more information, or to book your place, contact Sharon on 07830 085606; or see www.barrypilates.co.uk.

Beginners Pilates Classes

Barry New Beginners Courses
Start Thursday 8th January 9am or Monday 19th January 11.30am

Cowbridge New Beginners Course
Starts Tuesday 20th January 10am

To book, or for more information:
Sharon 07830 085606
www.barrypilates.co.uk

New Year – new start with free courses

THE new year is a good time to think about gaining some new skills and build your confidence for a new start!

The Vale Adult and Community Learning have a range of free courses for anyone who is not currently in education, employment or training, in receipt of benefits or looking to improve their skills for the workplace.

For anyone who is a job seeker or thinking of going back to work, there are drop-in workshops and short courses to help you with using the Internet for job search and applications, creating CVs, interview skills and skills for the workplace.

There are also plenty of computer workshops spread throughout the Vale with the chance to brush up your ICT skills and gain some recognised qualifications.

Courses to help you get that job include workwise retail and customer service, British sign language and lip reading.



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THE HORSE WHO CAME TO LUNCH...



THE Fari Lwyd visited Cowbridge Community College recently for a Welsh-medium lunchtime lecture, accompanied by a group of local men who sang verses at the door in a re-enactment of the old Glamorgan tradition.

Learners enjoyed a soup lunch and an entertaining lecture by Dr Siwan Rosser of Cardiff University, and the horse's Sergeant and men were rewarded with fine cake, and tea in lieu of ale!

This was the second in a series of six lectures to be held in Welsh, provided by Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan Adult

Learning Partnership. The next, on January 16, will be given by Ffion Reynolds, on the topic of Tinkinswood and Llwynelidion.

For further information, contact Mared Furnham 01446 733762 or mrfurnham@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

Y Ceffyl a Ddaeth i Giniō
Cafodd Mari Lwyd y Bonfaen ddod am dro o'i chartref yn Amgueddfa y Bonfaen yn ddiweddar i ymweld â'r Coleg Cymunedol ar gyfer achlysur Darlith a Chiniō.

Daeth nifer o Gymry a dysgwyr Cymraeg i

glywed hanes traddodiad y Fari Lwyd wedi i adrodd yn gelydd gan Dr Siwan Rosser o Brifysgol Caerdydd, yn yr ail o gynfod o ddarllithoedd cyfrwng Cymraeg a drefnir gan Bartreraeth Addysg Oedolion Caerdydd a Bro Morgannwg.

Hebryngwyd y Fari gan grŵp o ddynion lleol ganodol yr hen bennillion am dâl o 'dishes fras felys' a phanod o de!

Cai y ddarllith nesaf ei chynnal ar Ionawr 16, a'r darlithydd Ffion Reynolds yn siarad am hanes Tinkinswood a Llwynelidion.

Am fanylion pellach cysylltwch â Mared Furnham ar 01446 733762 neu mrfurnham@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk

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GEM Readers' Letters Extra

Waiting times for operations

IHAVE read Mr Hopkins' recent letter regarding NHS waiting times and I could not agree more. I also read Caroline Scott's letter, which outlined her experience; the way she was treated was shameful to say the least.

I have now, at last, had a reply from Mark Drakeford AM, regarding hip/knee replacement surgery.

He states that 86 per cent of patients in Wales undergo surgery within 26 weeks. He also states that the median waiting time for 50 per cent of patients is up to 15 weeks. However, he uses the word 'treatment', not surgery.

I had a consultation with an orthopaedic

J G Morgan,

Pontyclun.

'Princess of Wales staff were excellent'

IHAVE recently been treated at the Princess of Wales hospital in three different departments – audiology, ophthalmology and the scan unit.

I cannot fault the treatment I had. The staff were all caring, polite and professional.

I am very slow and elderly, but there was no trying to rush me.

Many thanks to all the staff involved.

Mrs R Guy, Llantwit Major

Coast is 'eyesore'

THE south Vale coast has become an eyesore to behold. Solar farms now clutter up the once beautiful countryside, slurry pits adorn the once unspoiled and protected Heritage Coast and there has been a year of delays due to roadworks under a sewerage pipe.

Let's not have another year of short-term financial gain for the planning people; things are starting to look ugly out there.

(Name and address supplied)

Barrier needed to safeguard children



IHAVE been made aware of a possible health and safety situation that could result in a fatality or serious injury to an infant.

On Barry Island, at Amherst Crescent, it would appear that Vale Council has very kindly decided to refurbish the children's play area in the vicinity of Barry Island Primary School.

Whilst the refurbishment is way above standard and a credit to the local authority, it would seem that certain safety issues have been left as an afterthought. The facility has a safety barrier/fence around the perimeter of this play area.

Its very close proximity to the adjacent roadway can be considered a safety hazard, and I fear it will not be very long before a little child runs off and into the path of a motor car.

I call upon the council to install a safety barrier around this facility to guarantee the safety of children.

Barrie V Evans,
Coordinator, Barry First Group
Barry Voice

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GEM readers' donations will help care for dogs like Gabbi

GEM readers responded to the Christmas animal rescues appeal with customary generosity.

Joanne Eveleigh, the organiser, said: "I would like to say a huge 'thank you' to everyone who donated items for dog rescues in Wales."

"We have had a great response and would like everyone to know that the items collected are being distributed."

"The blankets, beds, treats, food, leads, collars, coats and other items will be of great help to the 'rescues' this Christmas and New Year as they are full to capacity. I will ensure personally that they are delivered to rescues in Wales."

UK German Shepherd Rescue is just one of the rescues in Wales to benefit. Readers' donations will help the likes of 'Gabbi' – whose full name is Gabriel – who was tied to a tree and abandoned.

Joanne said: "He was left to fend for himself. His hair was matted and had to be shaved off."

"He should be enjoying his life,"

by GEM REPORTER



Gabbi is one of the mistreated animals being helped thanks to readers' generosity.

running round in a loving family home. Instead, he is petrified of the outside world and every step for him outside is a huge achievement.

"He is scared of his own shadow. When he was shaved recently, there were large puncture wounds found in his neck, these are quite deep and nasty."

"He is just one of thousands of dogs that get dumped every day for no reason."

"We will never know the extent of this poor boy's life and injuries. Suzanne on 01925 634699 / 07789 881850.

Commissioner's praise for older people's projects

THE Older People's Commissioner for Wales has praised work going on across the Vale to support older people in the area.

Over the past year, the commissioner, Sarah Rochira, and her team have met hundreds of people as part of the commissioner's engagement roadshow, a series of visits to learn about inspirational projects and initiatives.

One of the visits was to the Vale's Senior Health Shop on Holton Road, Barry, which welcomes 300 people every week to its community café, where they are able to take part in activities such as knitting and exercise, receive advice on caring, different illnesses and access to benefits, as well as benefiting from health services such as toe nail cutting.

The initiative is made possible by around 21 volunteers who give a combined total of 80 hours every week and offer a wide variety of information and advice.

Between July and September alone, they helped with 72 enquiries, relating to things like blue badges, cancer, tax, home adaptations and residential care.

TRANSFORMATION

On other visits, the commissioner's team found out about projects aimed at getting older people online. Communities First Barry hold classes in the town three times a week and have helped over a hundred people, some of them older people, who are learning how to order shopping or take part in internet forum discussions

about their favourite football teams.

The commissioner's team also visited Oak Court on Myrtle Road, Penarth, where social landlord Wales and West Housing helps tenants to enhance and maintain the grounds.

A group of residents began the transformation by clearing the overgrown garden and cutting the lawn, before adding flower beds and growing produce, such as runner beans and tomatoes, in a greenhouse they erected.

The residents have now extended a patio area and their work has helped create a wonderful social area that older people can enjoy.

REGULAR VISITORS

The commissioner's team are also regular visitors to meetings of the Penarth Ageing Well Club, which is a prominent local voice and meets weekly to discuss issues affecting older people from the area.

Sarah Rochira said: "My team and I have spent a lot of time in the Vale over the last year and have been incredibly impressed with much of the work happening to make the area a better place to grow older."

"As well as many organisations and forums that are empowering older people to get involved in the decision-making process, there are many charities and voluntary groups offering support ranging from emotional to help getting online or starting new activities."

Children of foster carers take centre stage at presentation

The children of foster carers are thanked by Coun Huw David, Council Leader Mel Nott, and the Mayor of Bridgend county borough Coun Gary Thomas.



THE children of foster carers in Bridgend county borough have been thanked for their contribution to fostering.

A BCBC spokeswoman explained: "Fostering is not just a decision for adults but for the whole family. When a family decides to foster, children have to share their homes, toys, and above all, their parents' time and attention with the looked-after children. In addition they have to deal with sometimes difficult and challenging behaviour."

"However, the majority of children thrive as part of a fostering family and actively contribute by offering support and being a positive role model to fostered children. Sons and daughters help to make foster placements a success."

Their role was recognised at an event hosted by the Mayor of Bridgend county borough at the Civic Offices in Bridgend. The mayor, Coun Gary Thomas, said: "It gave me great pleasure to host this event for the foster carers' birth children as they are often the unsung heroes."

"Fostering is a big change for everyone and affects the whole household so we believe the sons and daughters deserve to be recognised and feel valued for the selfless role they play, which is why a celebratory event was held for them. They truly are a credit to both their families and communities."

The mayor presented the children with a copy of the Dylan's Story leaflet – which the sons and daughters helped to create by drawing on their own experiences – along with a selection box.

The event was also attended by council Leader, Mel Nott and Coun Huw David.

Young Farmers Club members sharpen up their verbal skills!

Junior reading team: Oliver Popham, Evan Thomas, Keira Atyeo-Canter.



MAENDY Young Farmers Club members worked hard in rehearsals for the Glamorgan YFC public speaking competitions, and it certainly paid off.

The first competition on December 7 at Pendoylan Primary School, proved a successful day for the club.

The junior reading team, made up of under-14 members Evan Thomas, Oliver Popham and Keira Atyeo-Canter, took first place. Evan and Oliver were also selected for the county team.

Two junior public speaking teams represented the club. The winning team consisted of Emma Popham, Lauren David and Ellie Howes, while the second team were placed a very commendable fourth.

Club chairman, Heather Jarvis and vice chairman Kate Thomas competed in the 'senior member of the year' event, achieving fifth and 10th place respectively.

The last competition of the day was intermediate brainstrust, a panel discussion where members debate three topics of recent news against the clock. The team consisted of Jack

Clothier as chairman with Rob David, Mathew Davies and George Thomas as panellists. The team was placed third on the day, with George Thomas selected for the county team.

The second competition day took place on December 14 at Neath Conservative Club. The five-strong senior after-dinner speaking team took first place in the competition, and team members Heather Jarvis, Jeuan Rosser and Tom Rees were selected for the county team at the Wales YFC competition in March.

Members also took part in the 'call my bluff' competition, with one of the teams finishing in joint third place.

A big thank you goes to all club trainers – Hannah Lewis, Becky Harry, Natalie Lewis and club president Richard Western for all their hard work and guidance.

The focus then turned to the festive season. Members enjoyed a Christmas jumper-themed meal at The Red Fox, Penllyn, on December 8.

For further information visit www.maendy-yfc.com or email maendy.yfc@gmail.com.

School's Santa appeal is a hit

I WOULD like to let GEM readers know about the very successful festive fundraising efforts of students at Brynteg Comprehensive School.

This year's Santa appeal raised £4,778.14, and it enabled the school to buy Christmas presents for 200 children in the county borough.

A donation was also made to the Women's Refuge of £275.

The school wishes to thank Apsee's Removal Company for their continued support in picking up and delivering the Santa sacks.

On Friday, December 12, Brynteg staff donned their Christmas jumpers for 'National Christmas Jumper Day' and raised a further £148, which was sent to the Save the Children Fund.

PAM DOSTER, Brynteg School.

'Beware rogue traders', county council warns

RESIDENTS of Borough Council, Coun Bridgend county Mel Nott, said: "The borough are urged to be wary of rogue traders who may view this as an ideal time to dupe vulnerable homeowners."

BCBC has warned that at this time of year, cold callers often turn up uninvited at people's homes to offer attractive packages, such as heating deals or cheap insulation.

Residents are being urged to turn cold callers away if they have not made an appointment, or seem to be using pressure tactics to sell goods or services.

For more information on how Bridgend County Borough Council's Trading Standards Service can help businesses, call 01656 643478 or email tradingstandards@bridgend.gov.uk.

To report incidents of rogue trading, call South Wales Police on 101 or Citizens' Advice Consumer Service on 03454 04 05 06.

Rain fails to deter the Boxing Day crowds

**PHOTOGRAPHS
by GLYN EVANS**

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THE Glamorgan Hunt drew huge crowds to Cowbridge on Boxing Day, despite heavy rain.

As can be seen from Glyn Evans' pictorial record of the day, there were some young festive riders in attendance too.



Cancer patients are thanked

MACMILLAN
Cancer Support in Wales would like to thank all of those cancer patients who took the time to respond to the Wales cancer patients' experience survey and enabled us to capture the voice of the patient.

This is the first time in the UK that detailed analysis of comments made by cancer patients about their treatment and care has been conducted.

It provides us with a powerful insight and richer understanding of the patient experience of cancer care in Wales.

Cancer patients had concerns around initial identification of symptoms, staff shortages and the provision of too little information and support.

But there were also high levels of satisfaction expressed around surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy and praise for specialist nurses.

Macmillan has responded to the results of this cancer patients' experience survey by calling on the Welsh Government to ensure the promises made in its Cancer Delivery Plan for Wales are fully implemented.

Cancer is the toughest fight most of us will ever face – but you don't have to go through it alone – the Macmillan team is here for you every step of the way.

So call us free on 0808 808 0000 or visit macmillan.org.uk

SUSAN MORRIS
(General Manager for Wales, Macmillan Cancer Support)



BCBC 'considers its options' after court quashes school closure

VILLAGERS in Llangeinor have had their best ever Christmas present – news that the High Court has quashed the decision taken by Bridgend county borough council to close their village school.

Campaigners battling to retain Tynyrheol Primary School took their fight to the High Court, calling for a judicial review of the decision. They won the argument with the court ruling that BCBC's decision taken last April to close Tynyrheol and move pupils to a new school at Betws, which would also replace Betws Primary School, should be quashed.

However, the council has the right to appeal.

Welsh Conservative Regional AMs Byron Davies and Suzy Davies, who both met campaigners and backed the fight, have welcomed this decision.

Byron Davies said:

"The council acted in a very high handed and arrogant way towards villagers. There was an assumption on the part

of the council that the decision was cut and dried and they paid very little heed at all to what people were saying.

"The council also failed to consult with the regional AMs for the area, including myself and Suzy Davies, despite the fact that we have a statutory right to be consulted. We were all elected – not just the constituency AM for Ogmore.

"As the Welsh Assembly has now been in existence for 15 years, it's inexcusable for officers to claim they did not know we should be consulted. The judge was very scathing in his comments about this failure on the part of the council.

"There are people all over Bridgend complaining about the way the council handles consultations, claiming that it tries to bulldoze its decisions through.

So, well done to the people of Llangeinor for standing in the path of this bulldozer and throwing a spanner into its works."

Suzy Davies said: "BCBC failed to follow proper procedures when it took the decision to

close this school. Its consultation procedures were fatally flawed and it failed to provide the substantive evidence it needed to justify closing down Tynyrheol.

"The council must urgently review all its consultation processes as failure to adhere to the Schools Code laid down by Welsh Government could cost the council taxpayers dearly because the council has been ordered to foot the bill for these proceedings.

"My warmest congratulations to the campaigners whose determination to see fair play had illuminated the council's slovenly approach to such an important matter."

A spokesperson for BCBC said this week: "Bridgend county borough council was the first local authority to attempt to undertake a school closure under the Welsh Government's new school organisational code."

"The outcome has provided clarity over a number of issues and we will be applying the knowledge gained from this process as we consider our options in light of the decision."

Valeways honour their 'passionate' volunteer



Alan's plaque is fixed to the stile.

VALEWAYS volunteers and members of Alan Wilson's family met recently to dedicate a stile with a brass plaque, at St Mary Church, to mark the contribution that Alan's volunteering has made to the Vale countryside.

The charity Valeways was formed in 1996 and shortly afterwards Alan became a volunteer. In the early days it was nearly all physical work clearing public rights of way which had been sadly neglected over the years, but from there the charity progressed to designing circular walks and producing high quality walk leaflets with route instructions and places of interest en route.

Alan was a major contributor especially with the church, college and lighthouse in the Llanwit Major area, the Six Village Walk around Cowbridge, Castle-upon-Alun and

Ogmore routes and the Valeways Millennium Heritage Trail which is now a UK national trail.

A trustee for many years and a walk leader for 12 years, he opened up the Vale countryside to explore many unknown trails for a whole new generation of walkers. Alan was not well enough to attend the ceremony, but I am sure he will be delighted that Valeways volunteering has managed to survive these difficult financial times.

There must be more 'Alans' out there who would like to do their bit to preserve the Vale's wonderful footpath network, whatever their interest and ability. Please contact Rebecca, our volunteer co-ordinator, at : Rebecca@valeways.org.uk or call the Valeways office on 01446 749000 from Monday, January 5.

Happy New Year to all Valeways volunteers and walkers; may you all continue to enjoy the Vale countryside and coast.

VAL WARLOW

HEAVY RAIN FAILS TO DAMPEN SPIRITS AS LOCAL HUNT MEETS IN COWBRIDGE



The pictures on this page were taken by MIKE WILCOCK.

They are available to order from wilcock60@aol.com or telephone 01446 774502.

COWBRIDGE was a sea of activity and colour on Boxing Day when the Glamorgan Hunt had its traditional gathering.

As you can see from Mike Wilcock's pictorial record of the occasion despite the teeming rain, the riders, horses, hounds and spectators all turned up, making the day a real spectacle.



Linda has stars in her eyes!

A SLIMMING group leader from Peterston Super Ely, Linda Bowen, is pictured with TV celebrity Peter Andre who co-hosted the Slimming World Awards with the organisation's chair and founder Margaret Miles-Bramwell.

"I'm so proud of all of our members. They've lost fantastic amounts of weight throughout 2014, with many of them reaching their target weights and improving their health substantially," Linda told him.



Local language student takes top Welsh prize

RIGHT: Mrs Anne Weedon with Madeleine Williamson-Sarll.

A PORTHCAWL Comprehensive pupil has been honoured in the recent WJEC achievement awards, which took place on December 18 at the exam board's head office in Cardiff.

Madeleine Williamson-Sarll, who gained five A grades at AS level and three A* and one A at A-level, received the award for the best A-level results in Welsh second language in the UK.

A gifted linguist, raised in a German-English speaking environment, Madeleine studied German, Welsh, English and French for A-level, having also studied Religious Education to AS level.

Madeleine is a passionate advocate for the Welsh language and all language learning, with her dedication being rewarded not just with her outstanding results, but with the coveted Chair in the 2014 School Eisteddfod, with her poem entitled 'Pobl Ifanc Yng Nghymru'.

She recently worked for a few months in Austria as part of her gap



year and intends reading German at university next autumn. Madeleine is considering working in Patagonia in the New Year, with the aim of learning more Welsh by teaching it to youngsters in one of the Welsh schools there.

She also hopes to start tackling Spanish, adding a fourth foreign language to her repertoire.

One of Madeleine's Welsh teachers, Mrs Anne Weedon, accompanied Madeleine to the prestigious award ceremony. She said: "Congratulations to Madeleine on achieving the WJEC award for the highest mark in A-Level Welsh (Second Language) in the UK. She gained 593/600 UMS marks, which included full marks in

three modules.

"This was a fantastic achievement and it was a pleasure to join her at the awards ceremony. She is an incredibly clever and hardworking student and deserves this recognition. Llongyfachdau a phob lwm am y fyddol."

Madeleine was one of 75 students honoured across the UK. She said: I am extremely proud of this achievement and would like to thank my Welsh teachers for their support and encouragement. I hope to continue with my Welsh studies in the future and to build on this success."

Porthcawl Comprehensive headteacher Mr Andrew Slade also congratulated Madeleine personally: "This is a truly outstanding achievement and we are very proud of the honour you have brought to yourself, the school and the community.

"All of your examination marks during your time at Porthcawl Comprehensive School were first class, and gaining the top mark in Welsh is a reflection of your fantastic aptitude for languages, as well as your hard work and determination. I wish you every success with your chosen career. Well done, Madeleine!"

Mindfulness Classes

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**COWBRIDGE
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Y**

'Open your home to needy'

RESIDENTS are being urged to open their homes to adults with additional needs by the Vale Council's adult placement team, which supports those with learning disabilities, autism, physical disabilities and mental health problems.

Contact a c t
www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk or 01446 731105
for full details.

COLD SNAP!



THIS snap of a cow and her calf was captured at Three Fields Cowbridge the morning after a heavy frost on Monday, by GEM reader Gareth Richards.

Infants school wins award

Dinas Powys Infants School has become the 29th school in Wales to win the NACE Challenge Award for more able and talented pupils.

It is given for high quality work by the school in challenging all pupils, particularly those more able and talented, to achieve their potential.

NACE chief executive, Rowena Gaston, said: "Dinas Powys Infants School has worked hard

to win the NACE Challenge Award status. It has shown itself to be committed to developing a school where all pupils are challenged to be the best they can be.

The more able and talented children are challenged and this helps the other learners to see what can be achieved."

Assessors for NACE (the National Association for Able Children in Education) spent a day at the school observing lessons.

FLY-TIPPERS TARGETED



THE Vale Council enforcement and compliance team has taken to the streets to highlight the problem of fly-tipping and litter.

Coun Rob Curtis, senior enforcement officer Denny White, and officers from the cleansing team distributed leaflets to residents and businesses along High Street, Barry, encouraging them to report incidents.

Free compost

FROM January 2015, Vale residents will once again be able to collect free compost.

Cowbridge Compost, the company that deals with the Vale's food and green garden waste, will deliver a supply every month to the Court Road Depot in Barry.

Residents will be able to collect compost between the hours of 10am and 2pm on the last Sunday of the month, with the exception of December.

Coun Rob Curtis, cabinet member for environmental services, said: "I am pleased to see an important and much-

missed service reinstated by the council."

The existing free wood chipping collection will still run as normal on the last Sunday of the month.

John Homfray of Cowbridge Compost said: "We are delighted to be working in partnership with the council in reinstating this popular and environmentally friendly service to the residents of the Vale."

Residents are advised, when collecting the compost, to bring a shovel, a suitable container, protective gloves and suitable footwear.

Missing cat returns after seven years... (thanks to microchip)

A ginger cat who went missing for seven years is back home in time for the New Year thanks to a microchip and Cats Protection's Bridgend Adoption Centre.

Nine-year-old cat Garfield is back with his owner, Julie Calder, after he disappeared from her home seven long years ago.

In December 2012, Garfield turned up at a house in the same area as his original home. Mistaking him for a stray, a lady looked after him for two years before bringing him to Cats Protection's Bridgend Adoption Centre when she could no longer care for him.

The centre scanned



Sheer bliss! Julie and Garfield are reunited after seven long years.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SUE DOBBS

something we haven't reveal a microchip." Microchips contain a proceede to lick her unique identification face. Apparently he used number and are inserted to do this before he went under the cat's skin between the shoulder blades. The number is linked to a database containing details of the pet, as well as the owner's contact details. When a scanner detects the microchip, a simple phone call can ascertain the owner's details and the pet can then be quickly returned home.

The centre scanned Garfield for a chip and, though it showed up an old address, the centre did a bit of extra detective work and managed to track down Julie, who had since moved house.

Julie came to collect Garfield this week on Tuesday, December 30, in an emotional reunion.

She said: "I am over the moon to have Garfield back home after seven years. I never stopped thinking about him and wondering where he was.

"He is going to be very spoilt now!"

Having been grumpy during his time with Cats Protection, Garfield visibly relaxed as soon as he saw his owner.

Sue Dobbs, the manager of the Bridgend Adoption Centre, said: "Julie just picked him up,

Maesteg school wins TV competition for 'Christmas 1914' carol

AFTER weeks of competition, the winner of S4C's Carol yr Wyd 2014 was Ysgol Gynradd Cynwyd Sant, Maesteg with the original carol 'Nadolig 1914'.

The choir was one of 10 competing for this year's title on S4C's afternoon magazine programme *Prynhawn Da* during December. Judges Alun Guy and Elin Llywelyn-Williams were looking for the best original carol, with the schools' music teachers responsible for composing it.

The winning carol marked a century since the legendary football game between German

and British soldiers in the trenches of the First World War.

Judge and Cör y Cwm conductor Elin Llywelyn-Williams said: "We were looking for a blend of words and music where the message of Christmas was clear."

"The carol had a wonderful feel and mood to it and mixed perfectly depth."

Valeways guided walks
ON January 1, a New Year's Day walk starting from St Peter's Church in Mill Road, Dinas Powys at 1pm.

On January 4 at 2.30pm The Island in Winter: Barry Island Railway Station (grid ref ST 114667). January 6 at 10am, Hoffi Cerdded, Hoffi Coffi at the Coffee Cove Cafe, Barry Island. January 7 the Coffee Shop Strollers of Cosmeston meet at Cosmeston Country Park outside the Visitor Centre at 10.30am.

VALE SHOW SOCIETY PRESENTS TROPHIES AT ANNUAL DINNER



Tony and Edward Thomas, Pancross, receive the Victor Ludorum.



Stalwarts of the show committee over many years, seated from left: John Arnott and Mary Thomas; standing from left, Sarah Fanner (the new secretary) Pam Harris and Nicola Gibson.



ABOVE: President Martyn Popham presents the Homfray Perpetual trophy for Silage to Jock Anstey of Tyfry.



The James Trophy went to Julian Radcliffe of Penmark.



The Robert Thomas Cup for most points in combinable crop section went to Richard Anthony of Tythegston.



Pam Harris (left) thanks Nicola Gibson for 16 years of hard work.

Pictures by HEATHER MARCH

THE Bear Hotel, Cowbridge, was the venue for the Vale of Glamorgan Agricultural Society's annual dinner and field class prizegiving.

Mrs Elizabeth Synan, chairman of the society, announced the prizewinners for 2014 field classes and president Martyn Popham presented the trophies. The evening also included the presentation of a gift to Mrs Nicola Gibson, to mark her retirement as general secretary after 16 years of dedicated service to the society.

The following prizes were awarded: **The Williams and Glyn Cup** for group of eight calf Holstein heifers judged on the farm – winner: Clive Thomas, Dros-y-Mor Farm, St Donats.

The Major Frank Homfray Perpetual Challenge Cup for the best clamp of silage – winner: O Anstey & Son, Ty Fry, Pendoylan.

The Fred Williams Memorial Cup for the best bag of silage – winner: RL Anthony & Son, Tythegston Farm, Bridgend.

The George Gibson Challenge Cup for the best long term Ley – three or more seasons – winner: E & H Radcliffe & Son, Penmark Place Farm, Penmark.

The Penlyne Cricket Club Perpetual Challenge Cup for the best short term Ley – 1 or 2 seasons (to include Italian Rye Grass) – winner: RL Anthony & Son, Tythegston Farm, Bridgend.

The Evan Crook Memorial Cup for the best field of winter barley – winner: G Anthony & Son, Haregrove Farm, Laleston.

The Vale Show Perpetual Challenge Cup for the best Field of Spring Barley – winner: T Rees & Son, Upper Parc Farm, Laleston.

The James James JP memorial Challenge Trophy for the best field of winter oats – winner: E & H Radcliffe & Son, Penmark Place Farm, Penmark.

The WD James Memorial Perpetual Challenge Trophy for the best field of winter wheat – winner: VJ Thomas & Son, Pancross Farm, Llancarfan.

The Gwyn Jervis Perpetual Challenge Cup for the best winter oilseed crop – winner: RL Anthony & Son, Tythegston Farm, Bridgend.

The AR Thomas Contractor Perpetual Challenge Cup for the best field of maize – winner: RL Anthony & Son, Tythegston Farm, Bridgend.

The Robert Thomas Memorial Perpetual Challenge Cup for the competitor receiving the highest number of points in the combinable corn section – winner: RL Anthony & Son, Tythegston Farm, Bridgend.

The Llancarfan Ploughing Match Perpetual Challenge Cup for the competitor receiving the highest number of points in the root section – winner: Robert Thomas, Ruthin Farm, St Mary Hill.

The Victor Ludorum Trophy.

The Vivian Thomas Memorial Perpetual Challenge Trophy for the Glamorgan Farmer winning the highest number of points in the Agricultural Section – winner: VJ Thomas & Son, Pancross Farm, Llancarfan.

The society is looking forward to hosting the 2015 Vale Show on August 12 in Fonmon Castle.

For further information, details of sponsorship opportunities and for trade stand information, please log on to www.valeofglamorganshow.co.uk email vale.show@outlook.com or telephone 07513 141 698 to contact Sarah Fenner, general secretary.

KPC says 'thank you for a memorable year'

KPC in Pyle would like to extend their thanks once again this year to everyone who has supported the charity during 2014.

Again we have had a busy and exciting year, with new projects starting and the change from being KPC Youth, to being KPC Youth & Community.

This has followed on from recent work we have begun to do, not just with young people, but with their parents and the wider community in which we live, particularly those who are unemployed.

Thanks as always go to everyone who has supported us in some way – be it through supporting our collection boxes, buying raffles, donating clothes, toners, stamps, inks etc, or supporting events, and also those who have undertaken sponsored events for us.

We also thank all our regular monthly supporters and organisations, such as Porthcawl Lions, who undertake local fundraising events of their own to help If you live locally and

charities such as ours. We also thank everyone who has made donations or gifts in time to us throughout the year – a big thanks to all who believe in the work we do, and help us achieve our aims.

2014 has seen KPC

need to review its

staffing structure,

in order that we can ensure our future. As part of this, a new evening timetable of opening will be introduced in the New Year, and also a trial after-school club for ages 5-plus on one evening per week.

Following on from our Buy a Brick Appeal, we have now secured funding from South East Wales Community Economic Development Fund and BAVO Social Enterprise Grant Scheme for professional fees so that architects' plans can be drawn up and full planning submitted for our proposed two-storey development, to replace the existing portakabin.

This is an exciting time for us, and one we have worked towards for several years. We will still need to secure major capital funding towards this, but have been invited to put in full applications for this.

If you are interested in finding out more about anything mentioned above, please contact Alison on 01656 749219, kpcyouth@hotmail.com.

**Alison Mawby
(Project development manager)**

Vale Council signs the White Ribbon pledge

Signing the White Ribbon pledge.



THE Vale Council, along with domestic abuse support service, Atal y Fro, has launched its White Ribbon Campaign at an event in the Civic Offices.

Council members, including Leader Neil Moore and council officers signed the White Ribbon Campaign pledge, which promises

"never to commit, condone, or remain silent about men's violence against women in all its forms."

The White Ribbon town award was presented to the Vale Council at the Senedd in Cardiff on September 30, recognising the council's continued commitment to the aims of the campaign.

Grant scheme helps young entrepreneurs

WHILE TV's *The Apprentice* has been gripping the nation, five entrepreneurs have set up new businesses in the Vale – thanks to a bursary scheme led by Creative Rural Communities (CRC).

The new businesses range from an online store selling 'steam punk' inspired accessories to a freelance sound recording service for TV and film production companies.

A beauty salon, a bi-lingual childminding service and a new clothing company have also been supported through 'Inspiring the Vale' bursaries.

CRC, the Vale Council's rural regeneration initiative, has encouraged young entrepreneurs in the Vale to apply for grants up to £3,000 to launch their own business.

Helmanas Lik, who has launched online steam punk accessory store Noble Lion, said: "Thanks to the 'Inspiring the Vale' bursary, I will finally be able to turn my hobby into a profitable business.

"It would have taken me a few years

to save up enough money for a successful business start but thanks to the Creative Rural Communities, I have the opportunity to make it happen now."

This is the second time the scheme project has been run by CRC. Between 2008 and 2011, 23 new businesses were supported – from barbers to photographers, and from caterers to those specialising in renewable energy.

"It is so encouraging to see new businesses being created across the Vale," said Coun Lis Burnett, cabinet member for regeneration, innovation, planning and transportation.

"This scheme encourages innovation from our young entrepreneurs. The team at Creative Rural Communities provide the support and encouragement they need to make their dream a reality, and we hope we see many more success stories in 2015."

To find out more about Inspire the Vale bursaries and Creative Rural Communities, visit www.creativeruralcommunities.co.uk.

Swimmers flock to the beach for seaside town's morning fundraising extravaganza

PORTHCAWL'S Christmas Morning Swim has gone from strength to strength in recent years, with its twin aims of providing a fun, social start to the big day, and of fundraising for local good causes.

This year, more than 1,500 swimmers dived in!

(See more pictures on page 32).

PHOTOGRAPHS by GLYN EVANS

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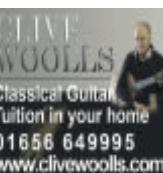
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6 hours a week to be used flexibly.

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01443 827930 quoting VOG015. Charity No. 1098229

Lost & Found**Missing Cat**

From Whitewell Drive area.
Black and White, three year old male cat named 'Oscar'.



Oscar has periodically wandered for 3-5 days at a time but has now been missing for a month.

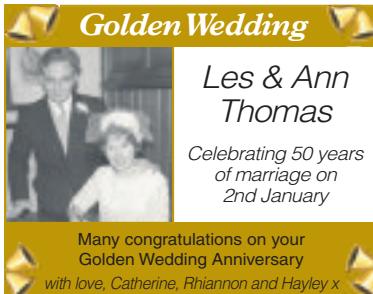
Small reward for recovery.
Tel 07917 366208

Thank You

Lilian and Bryan James send many thanks to everyone who kindly sent us such beautiful cards on the occasion of our Diamond Wedding Anniversary.

Special thanks must go to our son Nigel and his wife Sue who made the day so special and for arranging for a special greeting to us from the Queen.

Thank you, once again, and a Happy New Year to you all.

Wedding Anniversary**Golden Wedding**

Les & Ann Thomas

Celebrating 50 years of marriage on 2nd January

Many congratulations on your Golden Wedding Anniversary
with love, Catherine, Rhiannon and Hayley x

Public Notice**LICENSING ACT 2003**

Section 17 (5)

Notice of Application for a Premises Licence NOTICE IS GIVEN THAT

An application has been made to Bridgend County Borough Council (the Licensing Authority) for a PREMISES LICENCE.

To permit licensable activities which it is proposed will be carried on, or on or from the premises shown below. Details of the application may be inspected between the hours of: Monday to Thursday 0830 to 1700 hours and Friday 0830 to 1630 hours at Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB or by visiting the authority's website: www.bridgend.gov.uk. Any responsible authority or any other person may make representations in respect of the application, which must be submitted, in writing, to the following address before the date shown below:- Licensing Section, Bridgend County Borough Council, Civic Offices, Angel Street, Bridgend, CF31 4WB.

Name of applicant: Mr Zahid Rasul/Mrs Saima Rasul
Name and postal address of the premises: 33 Market Street Bridgend CF31 1LJ

Statement of intended licensable activities: (1) Plays, films, indoor sporting events, live music, boxing or wrestling entertainment, record music, supply of alcohol, performance of dance, rugby or football match from 11.30am till 2.30am. Refreshments 11.30am till 11.00pm

Date by which representations must be made: 17th January 2015.

This notice remains in force from and including the day after the giving of this notice to the licensing authority, namely Bridgend CBC on 22/12/14 for 28 consecutive days. It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application. The maximum fine on summary conviction is £5,000.

Family Notices**THOMAS****Tudor Vivian**

Peacefully on December 20, Tudor, formerly of Preston and Thomas, husband of Jeanne and father of Catherine and David, father-in-law of Ian and Rebecca, grandfather of Thomas and Emily.

Resting at the Private Funeral Home of W James & Sons, Fonmon. Funeral Friday January 9, service and cremation 12 noon at Coychurch Crematorium, Bridgend. No flowers by request, donations in lieu, if desired, to Dr. Barnados c/o J James, 11 Fonmon Road, Rhosneigr, Vale of Glamorgan CF62 3DZ.

CAULFIELD**Gary**

Peacefully on the 17th December at home, Gary aged 58 of Barry. Loved brother to Eileen and dear uncle to Lisa, will be sadly missed by all his family and friends.

Resting at Park Funeral Directors, 7 Tynewydd Road, Barry until the service on Thursday, 8th January, 1pm at Cardiff and Glamorgan Crematorium Port Road Barry. Funeral arrangements by Robert Johnson.

WATTS**Valerie**

Peacefully on December 16 at UHW Cardiff, Valerie, formerly of Llantrithdy, dearly loved mother of Gillian and Helen, dear mother-in-law of Ronnie and Cyril, much loved by Carol, Huw, Hannah and George, Michelle, Tim, Megan and Alex, Howard, Sarah, Cameron, Kaelan, Kaine, and Emma.

Resting at the Private Funeral Home of W James & Sons, Fonmon. Funeral Tuesday January 6, service and interment 2pm at Llantrithdy Church. Family flowers only may be sent to the funeral home, donations in lieu, if desired, to Llantrithdy Church Restoration Fund c/o J James, 11 Fonmon Road, Rhosneigr, Vale of Glamorgan CF62 3DZ.

LOWELL**Kathryn Elizabeth**

Peacefully after a short illness at Llandough Hospital, beloved daughter of the late Bill and Patricia Lowell, sister of Kerry and Jonathan and niece of Cynthia Booker and Brian Toomey. Funeral service to be held at Cardiff and Glamorgan Crematorium, Port Road, Barry on Wednesday, 7th January at 2pm.

No flowers please, donations to Cancer Research. Resting at Park Independent Funeral Directors, 7 Tynewydd Road, Barry. Funeral arrangements by Robert Johnson.

SMITH**John**

Sandy and family wish to thank everyone for their help and support, for the overwhelming number of cards and letters with messages of sympathy on their sad loss and for the donations given to The British Heart Foundation in John's memory.

HAMMETT**David Roger**

Peacefully on December 17, at College Fields N.H. Barry, David of St. Athan, dearly loved brother of Valerie and brother-in-law David, much loved uncle of Chris, Gavin and Sarah.

Resting at the Private Funeral Home of W James & Sons, Fonmon. Funeral Monday January 5, service and cremation 2.00pm at Cardiff & Glamorgan Crematorium, Barry. No flowers by request.

GRiffin**Germaine**

Sadly on Saturday 20 December 2014, Germaine of Llantwit Major. Dearly loved wife of Tom, loving mother to Angela and a much loved grand mother to Emma and Simon and great-grandmother to Isabelle. She will be sadly missed by her family and friends.

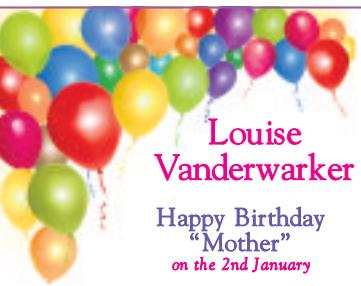
Resting at W.A. Brown & Son, College Street, Llantwit Major 01446 792489 until the funeral service on Tuesday, 6th January 2015 in Coychurch Crematorium at 3.45pm.

DOWDALL**Vincent Arthur**

Peacefully on the 16th December, at Princess of Wales Hospital, Vincent of Ham Manor. Beloved husband of Marie, much loved father of Fleur and Krista and a dear grandfather and father-in-law. Resting at William James & Sons, Fonmon, until the Funeral on Friday, 2nd January at 2pm at Cardiff & Glamorgan Crematorium, Barry.

Family flowers only please, donations in lieu to Wales Air Ambulance c/o J James, 11 Fonmon Road, Rhosneigr CF62 3DZ.

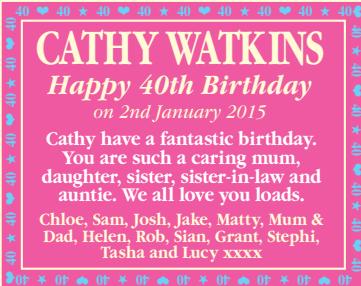
"So deep is the night, the lonely night,
On broken wings my heart has taken flight."
Rest my darling, till we meet again.
Your broken hearted wife, Marie. X

Birthday Notices

Louise Vanderwarker

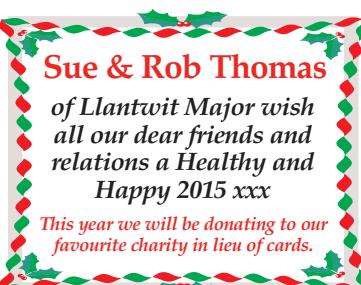
Happy Birthday
"Mother"
on the 2nd January

You're the best mum in the world
Love you everything Jacques xxxx



CATHY WATKINS
Happy 40th Birthday
on 2nd January 2015

Cathy have a fantastic birthday.
You are such a caring mum,
daughter, sister, sister-in-law and
auntie. We all love you loads.
Chloe, Sam, Josh, Jake, Matty, Mum &
Dad, Helen, Rob, Sian, Grant, Steph,
Tasha and Lucy xxxx

New Year Messages

Sue & Rob Thomas
of Llantwit Major wish
all our dear friends and
relations a Healthy and
Happy 2015 xxx

This year we will be donating to our
favourite charity in lieu of cards.

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IT'S A CRISP CHRISTMAS MORNING IN PORTHCAWL SO 'SEND IN THE CLOWNS'

**PHOTOGRAPHS by
MALCOLM NUGENT**

ORGANISERS asked swimmers to dress as clowns or Vikings for this year's Porthcawl Christmas swim – and quite a few did!

Altogether, 1,500 swimmers braved the cold waters, with many raising funds for local charities.



ABOVE: Clowns, clowns, everywhere, and these bear a disturbing resemblance to Stephen King's Pennywise!



Baywatch comes to Porthcawl!



Mike and Rick's brand new books are reviewed...

THE Mike Hall Story is one of the most fascinating books about Welsh sport.

For the first time, the full true story behind two of the biggest changes in Welsh rugby and football is told.

Mike Hall reveals new details about how Cardiff City Stadium was built, the controversial role of former owner Sam Hammam, and how close to failure the project was on many occasions.

Hall is also a former captain of Cardiff and Wales, so there are many new stories from the world of rugby – including how close Wales came to being the base for the Packer-circus style pair of professional rugby franchises in Cardiff and Swansea, rather than the current regional system.

The book gives great insight into the transition from the amateur to the professional era in Welsh rugby, with stories about the controversy of that period.

The book also follows Mike at some of his fundraising events, and shows the great work he and other rugby stars have done to raise money for Velindre Cancer Centre.

"I have been involved in some big stories in Welsh sport and this is the chance to set the record straight," said Hall.

"I am delighted proceeds from the book will help the cancer care at Velindre Hospital – a thoroughly worthy cause."

Mike, who gives his unique verdict on the current state of play in Welsh football and rugby, and about which of the two can lay claim to being the national sport of Wales,

with some surprising answers. *The Mike Hall Story is published by Y Lolfa at £9.95.*

RICK O'SHEA was born in Wales, raised in England and is of Irish ancestry – three countries he wasn't good enough to play for!

However, this very ordinary player tells an extraordinary story in his book *Rick O'Shea – It's All Rugby* (published by Y Lolfa at £9.95).

In an unusual, colourful and humorous story, we visit Cornwall where Rick grew up; Australia, where his father lives; and go back and forth to Wales, and many points in between.

The journey, like this book, is what you might imagine, plus a whole lot more.

As Nigel Owens said: "It's not often that we come across real characters in sport these days, but Rick O'Shea is one of them. He has the skill to make things fun to watch and is also very knowledgeable.

Rick is one of the genuine guys who has time for everyone and is always a pleasure to work with."

Some 207 pages, with 14 pages of illustrations, this book reveals how Rick has been haunted by fears of perennial underachievement both on and off the pitch, until that is, he became a father and qualified as a doctor in his 40s.

For the first time, he began to realise the 'big match potential' an old headmaster had spotted.

BRIAN LEE

Barry & District Ladies' skittle league

First Division: Allsorts (R Dawe 29) 272, Colcot Lds (A Singleton 27) 277; Coppers (J Hartnett 37) 352, Red Admiral (S Hayes 31) 330; SV Gals (J Richards 32) 296, Space Finders (M Clark 27) 253; Barry Stars (W Phillips 39) 333, Cigar Lds (L Webb 30) 301; Pila Palas (spotter A Williams 31) 314, Family Friends (C Mathews 34) 314.

Second Division: Strikers (B Page 31) 245, Vixens (H Jones 23) 198; Roller Coasters (J Marriott 27) 242, Bobby's Girls (A Seldon 27) 221; Witchill Widows (Adoel Davis 32) 310, Bandits (J Grant 31) 307; Divas (A Bird 26) 255, Cad Con Fillies (V Heard 25) 251; After Eights (P Bryant, E Carmichael 30) 309, Breakaways (B Thurston 29) 284; SV Lights (B Stephenson 30) 320, Rhoose Starlights (C Dally, L Fields, D Stradling 30) 289; Clickies (E Walters 36) 302, Witchill Weebies (A Reed 30) 312.

Third Division: Rhoose Ravers (J Loft 25) 244, Rugby Triers (N Williams 26) 231; Jolly Dollies (T Davies, G Lewis, M Enticott 24) 200, SV Lds (M McCavern 23) 222; Airways Angels (J Nash, A Reed 30) 217.

Fifth Division: Smurfs (R Emmett 27) 177, Nite Outers (K Stillman 29) 189; Hellraisers (A Bennett 22) 178, Aristocats (M Robson 27) 212.

Fifth Division secretaries please note, Park Belles no longer play.

Be Bop Boru is trainer Tim's winning baby!

ABERTHIN'S Tim Vaughan, who is the leading trainer at Fakenham, landed the opening Christmas Handicap Hurdle last Sunday with his *Be Bop Boru* which won by three and three-quarter lengths from *Changeofluck*.

Seven-year-old *Be Bop Boru*, which shared top weight of 11st 7lbs with the runner-up, was ridden by Alan Johns and was made the 6-4 favourite in a field of eight runners.

EVAN'S ACROSS THE CARD DOUBLE

Llancafan's Evan Williams had an across the card double last week.

His *Laser Hawk*, ridden by Adam Wedge, was a 20-1 winner of the maiden hurdle race at Newbury and at Ludlow, where he is the leading trainer, his *It's A Steal*, partnered by Paul Moloney, took the novices' handicap chase.

It's *A Steal*, who was winning for the second time in a week, went off the 11-8 favourite.

TIM'S BOXING DAY WINNER
Benability, a four-year-old bay gelding by *Beneficial*, was a Boxing Day winner for Aberthin's Tim Vaughan in the Conditional Jockeys Handicap Hurdle race at Fontwell.

Well ridden by Conor Walsh,

Benability, a 5-1 chance, won by four and a half lengths from *Nouailhas*.

JAMES'S SUCCESS AT COTTONHAM

The Vale's James Tudor won the open maiden race at the Cambridgeshire Hunt Point-To-Point Steeplechases on *Brians Well*, which went off the 3-1 favourite.

However, earlier in the day, James' mount *Harbour Court*, who was made an odds-on favourite to land the men's open race, was beaten a short head by *Brackloon High*.

Some racegoers were of the opinion that the result should have gone the other way and, but for a bad mistake by *Harbour Court* in the closing stages of the race, James would almost certainly have won.

ROSIES PEACOCK BEATEN
Wales' prolific point-to-pointer *Rosies Peacock* was beaten into second place by *Temple Grandin* in the men's open race at the Harkaway Point-To-Point at Chaddesley Corbett on Monday.

However, his rider, Welsh champion John Mathias, still had plenty to smile about as he was successful on 10-1 chance *Gale Force Lucy* in the club members' restricted race and *Shames A Bunch* in the club members' maiden event.

BRIAN LEE

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Met Blue, 79,000 miles, a/c etc, ideal family hatch
£5,495



10 BMW 120 Diesel M-Sport Coupe
In Silver with red leather, 21,000 miles, very desirable.
£14,695



10 TOYOTA Aygo "Blue" 1.0 VVTi
Electric Blue, 42,000 miles, £20 road tax
£4,995



11 JAGUAR XK 5.0 V8 Convertible
Silver, Black Hood, Black/Cream Leather, 25,000 miles, 1 owner
£34,995



07 SEAT Ibiza 1.4 Diesel Reference Sport 3-Dr
In Red, 79,000 miles
£3,995

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08 LAND ROVER Discovery 3 2.7 Diesel HSE, Automatic, 7-Seater. Silver with black leather, 58,000 miles, sat-nav, tv, steps, fully colour coded	£19,995
10 BMW 120 Diesel M-Sport Coupe. In silver with red leather, 21,000 miles, very desirable	£14,695
09 LOTUS Esprit 2.2 In white with navy leather, 33,000 miles, 25 year old sports car	£11,995
62 FORD Fiesta 1.2 Zetec 3-Dr In silver, 9,000 miles, a/c, alloys	Reduced to £7,995
55 MINI Cooper In black (chilli pack), 17" alloys, host of extras	£4,995
53 BMW 330 Diesel Sport Touring Auto In silver with grey leather, nice example at	£4,995
55 CITROEN One 'Seven Edition'. In met-red, 73,000 miles, alloys, a/c etc	£4,795
09 VAUXHALL Corsa 1.2 Club 5-Dr In black, 39,000 miles with a/c	£4,695
58 PEUGEOT 207 1.4 Diesel 'S' 5-Dr In met turquoise, 55,000 miles	£4,695
56 SEAT Toledo 2.0 TDI Styline Automatic. In black, 61,000 mile diesel at	£4,695
53 MERCEDES SLK 200 6-Speed In silver, 89,000 mile convertible at	£4,695
55 VW Golf 1.6 'S' Automatic 5-Dr In met-blue, 79,000 miles, a/c etc	£4,495
07 FORD Focus 1.8 Zetec 5-Dr. In ice blue, 47,000 miles with a/c	£4,395
08 MAZDA 2 1.4 TS2 3-Dr. In black, 59,000 miles, alloys, a/c etc	£4,295
07 TOYOTA Yaris 1.3 TR 5-Dr In black, 64,000 miles, a/c alloys	£4,295
07 VAUXHALL Vectra Exclusive CDTi H/back Auto In silver	£4,295
54 MINI Cooper. In electric blue/black roof, nice specification, good looking mini at	£4,295
57 SEAT Ibiza 1.2 Reference 5-Dr In met grey 53,000 miles	£3,995
07 SEAT Ibiza 1.4 Diesel Reference Sport 3-Dr In red, 79,000 miles	£3,995
06 FORD Fiesta Climate TDCi 1.4 5-Dr In black, 51,762 miles	£3,995
55 VAUXHALL Meriva 1.1SE (New Model). Silver, 55,000 miles, pan roof, alloys etc	£5,695
10 RENAULT Megane 1.6 Dynamique. In electric blue, 49,000 mile family hatch	£5,695
09 RENAULT Clio 1.2 Extreme 3-Dr In black, 36,000 miles, low insurance	£5,695
62 PEUGEOT 107 Active In red, 21,000 miles, free road tax, 1 owner	£5,495
58 FORD Fiesta 1.2 Zetec 3-Dr In black, 64,000 miles with parking sensor	£5,495
08 NISSAN Note 1.4 Acenta. In electric blue, 39,000 miles, alloys, a/c, c/d	£5,495
08 SKODA Fabia 3 TDI 1.9 Estate. In met grey, 71,000 miles	£5,495
08 VAUXHALL Zafira 1.9 Diesel Automatic Exclusive. In met blue, 61,000 mile 7 seater	£5,495
08 VW Golf 1.4 'S' 5-Dr In met blue, 79,000 miles, a/c etc, ideal family hatch at	£5,495
08 TOYOTA Yaris 1.4 Diesel SR D4D 5-Dr In met grey, 71,000 miles, sat-nav, 1 owner	£5,495
60 FORD Kuga 1.2 Zetec. Silver, 57,000 miles, one owner	£4,995
10 SMART Fortwo Pulse MHD 1.0 Convertible In black, 31,000 miles, £20 road tax	£4,995
09 FORD Focus 1.6 Zetec 5-Dr In met blue, 75,000 miles, ideal family hatch	£4,995
09 SUZUKI Splash 1.2 GLS+ 5-Dr. In met blue, 55,000 miles, low insurance	£4,995
08 RENAULT Clio Dynamique 1.2 Estate. In silver, 60,000 miles with a/c, alloys	£4,995
08 RENAULT Clio 1.5 Diesel Dynamique 5-Dr In black, 71,000 miles, 1 owner, £30 road tax	£4,995
08 RENAULT Clio 1.2 Dynamique 5-Dr (100) In black, 50,000 miles, 2 owners	£4,995
08 KIA Ceed 1.6 LS 5-Dr In met blue, 47,000 miles, alloys, a/c etc	£4,995
05 SEAT Altea 1.9 Diesel Reference In met ruby red, 72,000 miles, 2 owners	£4,995
06 SUZUKI Swift 1.3 SZ3 3-Dr In red, 59,000 miles, 1 owner	£4,995
10 VAUXHALL Corsa 1.2 SXi 3-Dr In white 71,000 miles with privacy glass, alloys, cd	£4,995
10 TOYOTA Aygo "Blue" 1.0 VVTi 5-Dr In electric blue, 42,000 miles, £20 road tax	£4,995
09 PEUGEOT 207 1.4 Diesel 'S' 5-Dr In silver, 63,000 miles, low road tax	£4,995
08 FORD Focus 1.6 Zetec 5-Dr In met-blue, 61,000 miles with a/c etc	£4,995
05 HYUNDAI i10 Style 2.0 Diesel 5-Dr In silver, 72,000 miles, nice example	£4,995
55 RENAULT Scenic 2.0 Dynamique In met blue, 76,000 miles, on offer at	£1,995
56 SUBARU TriBeca B9 Automatic 3.0 Litre 7 seater 4x4 Met grey with grey leather, 58,000 miles	£7,495
10 SMART Fortwo Pulse MHD Convertible Black, 31,000 miles, £20 road tax	£4,995
59 SKODA Octavia 1.9 Diesel SE Estate In Silver, 75,000 miles, nice example	£5,995



12 CITROEN C3 Picasso 1.6 Diesel VTR+
Silver with sat/nav, alloys etc
£7,995



CITROEN C5 VTR Plus 2.0 Petrol Automatic
Blue, 39,148 miles
£5,995



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Two wins for Athletic over festive period ease relegation worries for club

BRIDGEND ATHLETIC faced their second derby encounter in six days in a Boxing Day encounter at the Bridgend Ford Brewery Field.

The previous week they came away from the Dairyfield with a 33-21 victory over Llanharan and gained another four vital Championship points in an encounter with local rivals Tondu with a 7-3 victory. This propelled the Athletic to ninth place and 12 points above the relegation zone.

Last season Championship winners Ebbw Vale and Tondu were the only sides to do the double over the Athletic, and of late Tondu have been a nemesis and thorn in the Athletic's side.

Unfortunately the tactics for both sides were dictated by the monsoon conditions and surface water on the field, which caused the referee to ask both sides' coaches at half time if they wished to continue the game.

Tondu kicked off and dominated territory in the opening 10 minutes.

However the front five of the Athletic props Wayne Fooks and Matthew Norman, hooker Nathan Holman and locks Tom Penny-Ellis and Henri Williams were totally dominant in the set scrums.

It was then the Athletic's turn to press. They were awarded a succession of penalties when Tondu offended to prevent the Athletic pushing over from five metre scrummins. Surprisingly the Athletic did not look for a penalty try as on the third occasion they elected to move the ball wide only to drop the ball in a tackle and allow Tondu a get out of jail card.

The Athletic pack were now well on top and had a very effective driving maul which on one occasion went from inside their own half to within 15 metres of the Tondu try line. Only a Tondu infringement prevented them going all the way to the try line.

Athletic outside half Josh White, in terrible kicking conditions, was only just wide with his attempt on goal.

Tondu did latch on an Athletic dropped pass on half way and fly hacked the ball into the Athletic 22.

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Bridgend Bridge Club

THE results for Bridgend Bridge Club for recent events are:

Wednesday, December 17: First, Linda Pinock and Denis Mottram; Second, Glyn Williams and Irene Wickham; Equal Third, Bill Turner and Dave Lea & Steve Burgoyne and Anne Fox. Winners on handicap Linda Pincock and Denis Mottram.

Friday, December 19 (Merry Christmas and Mince Pies night): First, Jenny Vaughan and Irene Thomas; Second, Tony improvers for December and Emer Disley; Third, 18 were Rob Forman, Peter Morgan, Rosalie Dolan. Winners on Clode, Arthur Harvey.

DN



Bryntirion Comprehensive were the winners of the Ospreys Schools Cup, defeating Ysgol Gyfun Gwyr 36-12 at the Gnoll in Neath.

Bryntirion win the Cup!

FOLLOWING a successful summer rugby tour to Colorado and the introduction of a new rugby development officer (Kyle Tayler) at the school, rugby participation and success has soared at Bryntirion Comprehensive School.

Throughout the school there has been increased participation by both boys and girls in rugby. Boys teams are playing regular weekly fixtures and in recent weeks the new junior girls rugby team played their first fixture against Pencoed Comprehensive School (an established team) and drew 15-15. Congratulations to the girls involved.

This term boys' rugby has thrived

resulting in our senior XV team playing against Llangynwyd at the Brewery Fields, Bridgend which was televised on S4C. After an exciting and tight campaign in this year's Ospreys Schools Cup, it was Bryntirion Comprehensive and Ysgol Gyfun Gwyr that met in this season's under-14s final at the Gnoll.

There were some highly impressive breaks by both sides throughout the game and Sion Jansen for Bryntirion raced up the field just before half time to put his side in prime position. With Gwyr not making their tackles it wasn't long before Jacob Thomas for Bryntirion ran from the 22 to put the ball down between the posts. The half time score was Bryntirion Comprehensive School 12, Ysgol Gyfun Gwyr 7.

The second half got off to a much faster

start and Bryntirion were soon charging upfield. Gwyr were in no way ready to give the game up and weathered further attacks from Bryntirion before making several of their own.

Gwyr had some exceptional individual performances but Bryntirion proved themselves to be the whole package as the game went on. The final score was Bryntirion Comprehensive School 36, Ysgol Gyfun Gwyr 12. Well done to our year 9 boys for winning the Ospreys under-14s Cup.

Bryntirion have ended the term with a touch rugby festival for Years 7 to 10 which consisted of both boys and girls teams as well as mixed. Tom Graham and Tom Habberfield from the Ospreys attended the festival.

SW

Derby draw for Sports' under-9s

IN their final game of 2014, Bridgend Sports under-9s welcomed their neighbours Bridgend Sports for another of the Christmas derbies!

This was a game that proved to be a complete contrast to the away fixture played a month ago when the Sports were well beaten. The Sports were well below par on that occasion, having scaled Pen y Fan in the Brecon Beacons the day before.

On Sunday, in a game that was played in wet and muddy conditions, both sides abandoned the thought of any Christmas cheer, it was more about the competitive spirit of the closest of derbies. Bridgend Sports started the game and were soon to show their opponents that this game was going to be different.

An early attack saw the

Rogers the space for him to elude the remaining defender to score.

The Athletic responded by

trying to move the ball wide only to be bundled into touch with an excellent tackle from Sports player Callum Lewis.

Bridgend Sports attacked again with further straight running and good support play from Dylan Morgan, Thomas Coles, Dewi Worrall and Joel Rogers, only for the final pass to Alex Stimpson to be ruled forward 10 metres out.

From the scrum, Bridgend Athletic retained the ball for a period by opting to keep the ball close, eventually working their way upfield. The Sports constantly tackled but the pressure eventually led to a try for the first period to end with the scores level at 1-1.

In the second period, the challenging conditions dictated that short passes and driving play would prove to be the order of the day, with the occasional ball moved along the line. The Athletic scored first and the Sports hit back immediately; Dylan Morgan made a break, linked with Thomas Coles then

Jodie Keane and Joel Rogers, and he passed on to Tyrion Davies who changed the angle to cut back inside to score.

The two teams were now

extra sharp in defence and frequently thwarted attacks with a concerted, organised effort to close down any attack from any restart. Right at the end of the second period, the Athletic scored to edge the game 2-3 going into the final and third period.

With some supporters getting excited, the players concentrated efforts on the field of play. The Sports started with Mackenzie Dent setting off on a straight run, he passed to Callum Lewis who linked with Dylan Morgan, finding support from Mason Balmer and Dewi Worrall.

Dylan Morgan was on hand again to feed Mackenzie Dent who made no mistake in scoring the try that celebrated his return to the side and for his team to level the scores. The Athletic tried to hit back but were thwarted with excellent tackles from Joel Rogers and Callum Lewis.

The rain was now as

relentless as the tackling. The game entered the final minutes with the score level at 3-3. The Sports now concentrated their efforts on ball retention which frustrated their opponents and allowed the Sports to keep the pressure on the Athletic, but they just could not find that final score and the game ended in a draw.

The whole Bridgend Sports under-9s squad had displayed outstanding courage and commitment in atrocious conditions. It was a demonstration of their excellent team spirit, attitude and enjoyment of the sport, which the young players can take forward into 2015.

It is a credit to the coaching team of Justin Hostettler Davies and Craig Balmer who continue to work hard to develop young players in a fun, challenging way.

New players are always welcome, the squad trains every Wednesday at 6pm on the Bandstand field.

SP